



# Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals

**National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program**  
**School Year 2021-22**



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**Connecticut State Department of Education**  
**Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education**  
**450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504**  
**Hartford, CT 06103-1841**

# Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals

Connecticut State Department of Education

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/OVSguide.pdf>

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## About This Guide

This guide contains information, guidance, and resources for implementing the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) offer versus serve (OVS) provision for school meals in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP. This guide is based on the OVS regulations for the NSLP ([7 CFR 210.10 \(e\)](#)) and SBP ([7 CFR 220.8 \(e\)](#)) and the USDA's resource, *[Offer versus Serve Guidance for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program](#)*.

**This guide applies only to NSLP, SBP, and SSO meals for grades K-12.** The USDA does not allow OVS for preschoolers (ages 1-4) or for the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP). For information on the preschool meal patterns, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *[Menu Planning Guide for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP](#)*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For information on the ASP, refer to the CSDE's *[Afterschool Snack Program Handbook](#)*, and visit the CSDE's [Afterschool Snack Program](#) webpage.

Each section of this guide contains links to other sections when appropriate, and to websites with relevant information and resources. These can be accessed by clicking on the blue text throughout the guide.

The contents of this guide are subject to change. The CSDE will update this guide as the USDA issues additional policies and guidance regarding the preschool meal patterns. Please check the CSDE's [Offer versus Serve for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage for the most current version. For more information, contact Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Education Coordinator, at [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov) or 860-807-2075.

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## USDA Nationwide Waivers for COVID-19

Pursuant to the [COVID-19 Child Nutrition Response Act \(H.R. 6201, Title II\)](#), and the exceptional circumstances of the current COVID-19 public health emergency, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has established a variety of nationwide waivers to support access to nutritious meals, while enforcing recommendations from public health experts with regard to social distancing measures. For more information, visit the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s Operation of Child Nutrition Programs during Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreaks webpage.

School food authorities (SFAs) must apply to the CSDE to implement any of the current USDA waivers. If a sponsor has received approval from the CSDE to implement any of the national waiver provisions, these approvals supersede the applicable requirements in this guide.

For information on the NSLP and SBP meal pattern flexibilities for 2021-22, refer to “[Meal Pattern Flexibilities During COVID-19](#)” in section 1. For information on the OVS flexibility for 2021-22, refer to “[Waiver for OVS During COVID-19](#)” in section 1.



## CSDE Contact Information

For questions regarding the NSLP, SBP, and SSO, please contact the school nutrition programs staff in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education.

School Nutrition Programs Staff	
County	Consultant
<b>Fairfield County</b> (includes Region 9) <b>Litchfield County</b> (includes Regions 1, 6, 7, 12, and 14)	Fionnuala Brown <a href="mailto:fionnuala.brown@ct.gov">fionnuala.brown@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2129
<b>Hartford County</b> (includes Region 10) <b>Middlesex County</b> (includes Regions 4, 13, and 17)	Teri Dandeneau <a href="mailto:teri.dandeneau@ct.gov">teri.dandeneau@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2079
<b>New Haven County</b> (includes Regions 5, 15, and 16) <b>New London County</b> <b>Tolland County</b> (includes Regions 8 and 19) <b>Windham County</b> (includes Region 11)	Susan Alston <a href="mailto:susan.alston@ct.gov">susan.alston@ct.gov</a> 860-807-2081
Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education Child Nutrition Programs 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504 Hartford, CT 06103-1841	

For information on the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), visit the CSDE's [Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



# Abbreviations and Acronyms

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CN	Child Nutrition
CNP	Child Nutrition Programs
CSDE	Connecticut State Department of Education
FBG	Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
HHFKA	Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296)
MMA	meat/meat alternates
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
OVS	offer versus serve
oz eq	ounce equivalent
PFS	product formulation statement
POS	point of service
RCCI	residential child care institution
SBP	School Breakfast Program
SFA	school food authority
SSO	Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WGR	whole grain-rich

# 1 — Overview of OVS

OVS is a concept that applies to menu planning and the determination of reimbursable meals for grades K-12 in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO. OVS must be implemented at lunch in senior high schools but is optional for all other grades. OVS is optional for the SBP and SSO. The USDA does not allow OVS for the ASP or preschoolers (ages 1-4).

OVS allows students to decline a certain number of food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) in the meal and select the foods they prefer to eat. OVS is designed to reduce food cost and waste. It also allows school food authorities (SFAs) the flexibility to address student participation and selection trends to determine what and how much food to prepare.

Table 1-1 summarizes the OVS requirements for lunch and breakfast.



Table 1-1. Overview of OVS requirements for grades K-12

Criteria	Lunch	Breakfast
<b>Implementation</b>	Mandatory in senior high schools and optional for all other grade levels. Optional for the SSO. Not allowed for preschoolers.	Optional for all grade levels. Optional for the SSO. Not allowed for preschoolers.
<b>Reimbursable meals</b>	Must offer five components (milk, meat/meat alternates (MMA), vegetables, fruits, and grains). <sup>1</sup>	Must offer at least four food items from three components (milk, fruits, and grains). <sup>2</sup>
<b>Required number of student selections</b>	Students must select at least three components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other food components.	Students must select at least three food items, including at least ½ cup of fruits (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and the full serving of at least two other food items.
<b>Pricing</b>	Priced as a unit (same price regardless of number of food components chosen).	Priced as a unit (same price regardless of number of food items chosen).
<b>Extra foods</b>	Not credited for OVS.	Not credited for OVS.

<sup>1</sup> A food component is one of the five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals. i.e., milk, MMA, vegetables, fruits, and grains.

<sup>2</sup> A food item is a specific food offered within the food components. It may contain one or more food components, or more than one serving of the same component. For example, a 2-ounce whole-grain bagel at breakfast is one food component that contains two food items. For more information, refer to “[Food Items at Breakfast](#)” in section 3.



## OVS Requirements for the NSLP and SBP

OVS is implemented differently for lunch and breakfast. However, some OVS requirements are the same, including the procedures for:

- meeting the meal pattern requirements;
- unit pricing;
- point-of-service (POS) meal counts;
- offering choices within components;
- meal identification signage.
- food service staff training;
- a la carte sales; and
- extra foods.



This section includes guidance on meeting these requirements.

### Meeting the meal pattern requirements

SFAs must plan menus to meet the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for each grade group, and provide all students access to the required types and amounts of food. The NSLP and SBP meal patterns require daily and weekly amounts of each component. OVS applies only to the daily meal pattern requirements.

For detailed guidance on the meal pattern requirements, refer to the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For information on crediting foods, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#) and visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Crediting documentation

SFAs must maintain crediting documentation for commercial products and foods made from scratch. Menu planners should follow the guidance below to ensure that school menus comply with the crediting requirements of the NSLP and SBP meal patterns.

- **Use the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG):** The USDA's [FBG](#) determines food yields and crediting information, and the specific contribution of foods toward the meal pattern requirements. It indicates how many servings a specific quantity of food will provide, what quantity of raw product will provide the amount of ready-to-cook food in a recipe, and how much food to buy to provide a specific meal pattern contribution.

- **Obtain a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) for all commercial processed products:** SFAs must have a CN label or PFS to document the meal pattern contribution of all commercial processed foods. Commercial processed foods without this documentation cannot credit. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), [Product Formulation Statements](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP](#). Additional resources are available in the “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs Programs](#) webpage.
- **Maintain standardized recipes for foods made from scratch:** SFAs must have standardized recipes that document the crediting information for all foods made from scratch. Determine the recipe’s meal pattern contribution per serving by: 1) using the FBG to determine the weight or volume of each creditable ingredient in the recipe; and 2) dividing the weight or volume of each creditable ingredient by the number of servings. The FBG’s [Recipe Analysis Workbook](#) (RAW) allows menu planners to search for creditable ingredients and calculate a recipe’s meal pattern contribution. For more information, visit the “[Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs Programs](#) webpage.

## Unit pricing

Meals must be priced as a unit. This means that students pay the same price regardless of whether they take three, four, or five (or more) food components for lunch; or three or more food items for breakfast. SFAs must establish one price for a complete reimbursable meal in the paid meal category and one price for a complete reimbursable meal in the reduced-price meal category.

SFAs may set different unit prices (tiered pricing) for various combinations of foods offered as a reimbursable lunch or breakfast. For example, SFAs could offer a variety of lunch entree choices (such as hamburger, chef’s salad, lasagna, and turkey sandwich), and set different unit prices for each type of lunch. However, all students, including those eligible for free and reduced-price meals, must be allowed to select any reimbursable meal. Meals with a higher unit price must be available at no cost for all free-eligible students. For reduced-eligible students, the unit price cannot exceed 40 cents for lunch or 30 cents for breakfast.

## Point-of-service (POS) meal counts

The POS is the point in the food service operation where school food service staff can accurately determine that a reimbursable free, reduced-price, or paid lunch has been served to an eligible child. SFAs should ensure that school food service staff know how to identify reimbursable meals with OVS, and provide training on recognizing reimbursable meals at the POS. For more information, refer to “[Food service staff training](#)” in this section.



## Offering choices within components

The USDA encourages SFAs to give students various options of entrees and other menu items, such as fruits and vegetables, and requires a variety (at least two different kinds) of milk choices (refer to “[Milk Variety](#)” in section 2). This increases the likelihood that students will select the foods and beverages they prefer, which increases consumption and reduces waste. However, it is important to recognize that offering a variety of choices within the food components (lunch) and food items (breakfast) is different from implementing OVS. For example, if students are required to select a choice from every component, the school is not implementing OVS. OVS allows students to decline some food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) entirely.



SFAs determine if the lunch and breakfast menus will offer variety and how much a student may select. SFAs may offer more than the minimum requirements if the weekly menu does not exceed the USDA’s dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. For example, a breakfast menu for grades K-12 could offer four ½-cup servings of fruit and allow students to select three or four servings, which is more than the minimum required 1-cup offering for each grade group.

SFAs must indicate what choices or combination of choices students may select for a reimbursable meal. Signage must be near or at the beginning of the serving line, prior to the POS, and located on the serving line near each food component, as applicable. This prevents unintentional purchases of a la carte items and help students choose a reimbursable meal. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in this section.

For example, for grades 9-12 at lunch, SFAs may choose to offer the required 1 cup of the fruits component as a variety of ½-cup fruit selections and allow students to choose two servings. The cafeteria signage near the fruits component must indicate that students may select one or two ½-cup servings of fruit with each meal. This provides a variety of food choices and shows students how to select a reimbursable lunch. It also constitutes OVS because students may choose to decline the fruits component entirely or take one or two ½-cup servings from the fruits offered. **Note:** Students who decline the fruits component must select at least ½ cup of vegetables.

## Meal identification signage

Students must be able to identify what constitutes a reimbursable meal. Signage and menus must provide clear information about allowable choices. This information is critical to help students choose reimbursable meals, and successfully implement OVS. SFAs must use meal identification signage to instruct students on how much food to select from each component for a reimbursable meal, based on the daily menu's planned servings for each grade group.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) requires that signage must be near or at the beginning of the serving line, prior to the POS, and located on the serving line near each food component (as applicable) to prevent unintentional purchases of a la carte items and help students choose a reimbursable meal. This requirement applies to all schools and institutions, including those that implement family-style meal service. For more information, refer to “[Family-style Meals](#)” in this section, and section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).




The CSDE requires that signage regarding what and how much students can take must be located at *all applicable points* in the serving line where the food components are available. For example, if a high school offers fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings and allows students to select two servings of fruits and two servings of vegetables to meet the required 1-cup serving, the cafeteria signage must clearly communicate that students may select up to two servings of fruit and two servings of vegetables with each meal. This signage must be located on the serving line where the fruit and vegetable options are located.



SFAs may choose how to identify the foods that are part of reimbursable meals, based on their facilities, layout, and other considerations. Some examples of acceptable signage include menu boards, posters, signs, labels, and table tents. Providing detailed information about the food components, such as identifying the vegetable subgroups, is not required but is an excellent teaching tool. The CSDE strongly encourages SFAs to provide detailed information on food items and choices whenever possible, within the constraints of the menu and serving line. This helps promote the school nutrition programs and makes it easier for students to understand exactly what school meals include. Table 1-2 shows some examples of menu signage.

Table 1-2. Examples of menu signage

 <p><b>MENU</b></p> <p>Choose 2 fruits  </p> <p>Choose 2 vegetables  </p>	 <p><b>MENU</b></p> <p>Choose 1 fruit </p> <p>Choose 1 or 2 vegetables  </p>
 <p><b>MENU</b></p> <p>Choose 2 fruits  </p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>Choose 1 fruit and 1 juice  </p>	 <p><b>MENU</b></p> <p><b>Choose one milk</b></p> <p>Unflavored low-fat milk </p> <p>Unflavored fat-free milk </p> <p>Chocolate fat-free milk </p>
 <p><b>Lunch</b></p> <p><b>MENU</b></p> <p>Choose 2 fruits  </p> <p>Choose 2 vegetables  </p> <p>Choose 1 grain </p> <p>Choose 1 meat/meat alternate </p> <p>Choose 1 milk  </p>	 <p><b>Breakfast</b></p> <p><b>MENU</b></p> <p>Choose 1 milk  </p> <p>Choose 1 or 2 fruits  </p> <p>Choose one of the following:</p> <p>2 servings of cereal  </p> <p>2 servings of toast  </p> <p>1 serving of cereal and 1 serving of toast  </p>

Menus are not required to itemize specific portion sizes or food items (such as the vegetable subgroups) if this information is listed on the school's production records. For example, a menu may list "daily salad bar," "fruit choice," or "vegetable choice" if the school's production record includes all food items and amounts served, and the school has appropriate documentation on file, including Child Nutrition (CN) labels, product formulation statements, standardized recipes, and nutrition information. For information on the documentation requirements for school meals, refer to section 2 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.

Signage is not required for field trips, meals in the classroom, and other venues where signage may be problematic. SFAs that offer meal choices in these situations should use other methods to inform students about what to select and whether OVS is implemented. For more information and resources on signage, refer to “Signage and Posters” in the CSDE’s document, [Menu Planning and Food Production Resources](#), and visit the “[Signage and Posters](#)” section of the CSDE’s OVS webpage. For examples of menu signage for OVS at lunch, refer to “[Sample Lunch Menus](#)” in section 2. For examples of menu signage for OVS at breakfast, refer to “[Sample Breakfast Menus](#)” in section 3.

### Food service staff training

OVS training is critical for SFAs to ensure correct meal counting and claiming with OVS. School food service staff must understand the OVS requirements, be able to accurately identify reimbursable meals at the POS, and be able to help students select the required quantities of the food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) for reimbursable meals.

The CSDE strongly encourages SFAs to conduct OVS training at least annually for cashiers, serving line staff, and other applicable staff. Training is especially important whenever changes occur to the school nutrition programs, such as new staff, new grade configurations, and new menu items. OVS training is most effective when SFAs use actual examples from their own school lunch and breakfast menus.



In addition to regular OVS training, a recommended best practice for cafeteria managers is to conduct a daily pre-service meeting with all applicable staff to review each menu choice and what students must select for a reimbursable meal. This helps ensure that all staff (including substitutes) can identify reimbursable meals.

OVS training meets the USDA’s professional standards requirements for annual training. OVS is listed under the subcategory of “Serving Food” for the key area of “Operations” in the USDA’s list of training topics for professional standards (code 2220). For more information, refer to the USDA’s resources, [Professional Standards Training Topics](#) and [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#), and visit the CSDE’s [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) webpage.

For information on OVS training for non-food service employees whose responsibilities include duties related to the operation of school nutrition programs (such as in-classroom meals), refer to “[Meals in the classroom](#)” in this section.



## A la carte sales

A la carte sales include foods and beverages that are sold separately from reimbursable meals, such as cookies, chips, ice cream, water, and other snack foods. Foods offered as part of reimbursable meals may also be sold a la carte. For example, SFAs could allow students to purchase pizza, fruit, salad, and milk as a la carte items.



Students and cashiers need to know which foods are considered food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) for reimbursable meals under OVS, and which foods are a la carte items. SFAs must communicate this information by providing adequate training for staff and appropriate signage for students. Signage must be at the beginning of the serving line and prior to the POS to prevent unintentional purchases of a la carte items and help students choose a reimbursable meal. The CSDE requires that signage regarding what and how much students can take must be located at all applicable points in the serving line, where the food components are available. For more information, refer to [“Meal Identification Signage”](#) in this section.

Meals are not reimbursable if students do not select the required number of food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) in the minimum quantities. In this case, SFAs may charge a la carte prices for each item selected by the student. To avoid problems at the POS, SFAs must provide clear signage for students, and should conduct training for cashiers and serving line staff so they understand how to help students select the required foods for reimbursable meals.

## Extra foods

Extra foods are foods served in addition to the required meal pattern components and servings. They include creditable foods from the food components, such as additional servings of grains, fruits, vegetables, MMA, and milk. They also include noncreditable foods that do not credit toward the meal patterns, such as potato chips, pudding, ice cream, maple syrup, cream cheese, bacon, and condiments (e.g., salad dressing, ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise).

Some noncreditable foods (such as candy, soda, coffee, tea, and sports drinks) cannot be sold in school nutrition programs due to federal or state requirements. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s guides, [Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools](#), [Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools](#), and [Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs](#); and visit the CSDE’s [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) webpage and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

Schools may offer allowable noncreditable foods as a complement to reimbursable meals. Students may select noncreditable foods in addition to the meal but noncreditable foods cannot credit toward the required food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) for a reimbursable meal under OVS.



For information on noncreditable foods, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).

All extra foods (creditable and noncreditable) offered to students with reimbursable meals count toward the USDA's weekly dietary specifications for school meals. Extra foods must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion cannot cause the lunch or breakfast menu to exceed the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For information on planning menus to meet the USDA's dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

## Considerations for Meal Service Systems with OVS

Schools and institutions may use several different meal service systems to offer reimbursable meals to students. Examples include cafeteria-style service, kiosks, classroom meals, and vending machines. At the senior high school level, OVS is required at lunch unless the SFA demonstrates to the CSDE that their meal service system does not accommodate OVS. This is most common in residential child care institutions (RCCIs).

This section addresses some of the meal service systems that might not readily accommodate OVS, and the requirements for ensuring compliance. The USDA strongly encourages SFAs to modify meal service systems to incorporate OVS to the extent possible.

### Classroom meals

To implement OVS with meals served in the classroom, SFAs must offer choices that include the required amounts of each component (lunch) or food item (breakfast), and students must select the minimum number of components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) for a reimbursable meal. SFAs must provide appropriate job-specific training for non-food service employees whose responsibilities include duties related to the operation of school nutrition programs. For example, teachers, teacher aides, and other applicable staff who conduct in-classroom meal counting and claiming must receive appropriate training to ensure they perform their jobs effectively and in compliance with the USDA's regulations. SFAs should have a written procedure in place for meal counting in the classroom and provide regular staff training on these procedures.

Non-food service employees whose responsibilities include duties related to the operation of school nutrition programs must be included in the SFA's annual professional standards tracking log. For more information, refer to the USDA's [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#), and visit the CSDE's [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) webpage.

The USDA requires that NSLP and SBP meal counts must be determined at the POS. Classroom staff must understand how to identify reimbursable meals with OVS and how to implement POS meal counts.

For classroom meals, the POS is the point in the meal service where classroom staff can accurately determine that all of the required components for a reimbursable meal have been served to the child. The USDA does not allow any other methods to determine classroom meal counts, such as student attendance, student orders for meals in advance of the meal service, or the number of meals sent to the classroom.



SFAs should have clear written meal count instructions for classroom staff that indicate how to identify reimbursable meals (including reimbursable meals with OVS, if applicable), how to take POS meal counts, how to handle leftover meals or foods (including milk). As a best practice, SFAs should include these instructions with the delivery of the field trip meals. This helps prevent situations where staffing variations (such as teacher absences, substitutes, and parent volunteers) result in staff who do not understand the required procedures.

Classroom meals must also comply with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP). The SFA's standard operating procedures (SOP) for classroom meals must include appropriate food safety procedures (such as ice packs and coolers) to ensure that classroom meals stay at proper temperatures during transportation and service. For examples of SOPs, refer to the Iowa State University's handout, [Standard Operating Procedure: Breakfast in the Classroom](#), the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) sample SOPs, [Transporting Food to Remote Sites \(Satellite Kitchens\)](#) and [Hot and Cold Holding for Time Temperature Control for Safe Foods](#), and the ICN's [Standard Operating Procedures](#) webpage.

As a reminder, the USDA does not allow OVS for preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP, including classroom meals for preschoolers. For additional guidance on classroom meals, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for Classroom Meals in the NSLP and SBP](#).

### Vending machine meals

Vending machines that provide reimbursable meals are part of the school food service program and are governed by the NSLP and SBP regulations. School meal vending machines must comply with the same procedures, menu planning requirements, and OVS requirements that apply to meals offered on the cafeteria serving lines. For additional guidance, refer to [USDA Memo SP 03-2007: Vending Machines in the School Meal Programs](#) and [USDA Memo SP 13-2008: Use of Vending Machines in the School Meal Programs](#).

### Advance ordering of meals

SFAs may implement OVS when students order meals in advance of the meal service. OVS does not require students to select the reimbursable meal components on a serving line. To implement OVS with advance ordering of meals, SFAs must offer choices that include the required amounts of each component (lunch) or food item (breakfast), and students must select the minimum number of components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) for a reimbursable meal. SFAs must carefully structure this type of meal system, check the resulting meals to ensure they are reimbursable, and provide clear information to students and families regarding the choices and requirements for reimbursable meals.

### Pre-plated meals

Pre-plated meals offer all food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) in the minimum required quantities for each grade group in an entirely or partially pre-served manner. Pre-plated meals must include at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) of each component required by the NSLP and SBP meal patterns.

This type of meal service is often used by schools and institutions that have logistical limitations for their meal service. Examples may include facility or space restrictions, or situations where children are unable to select the offered foods.

Senior high schools that offer only pre-plated lunches must implement OVS for all or some components, unless the SFA has received prior approval from the CSDE not to implement OVS.

SFAs that use pre-plated meals are not required to change their meal service systems to accommodate OVS. However, pre-plated meals must:

- offer all required food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) in the required quantities for each grade group, including a variety of milk choices; and
- meet the daily and weekly meal pattern requirements.



The USDA encourages SFAs to modify their meal service systems to include OVS opportunities whenever possible, such as allowing students a choice of different fruits and vegetables.

### **Pre-packaged meals**

Pre-packaged meals such as “grab-and-go” or bagged meals are similar to pre-plated meals. In senior high schools, pre-packaged meals are allowed only if the meal service system also has cafeteria lines that allow OVS. Senior high schools that offer only pre-packaged lunches must implement OVS for all or some components, unless the SFA has received approval from the CSDE not to implement OVS. Pre-packaged meals are allowed at all other grade levels.

Like pre-plated meals, SFAs using pre-packaged meals are encouraged to offer some choices, and the option to decline some food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) such as grains or milk. OVS is not required (even in senior high schools) if pre-packaged meals are offered as part of breakfast in the classroom, field trips, or for students leaving the campus for work-study.

### **Family-style meals**

Family-style meal service allows students to serve themselves from common dishes of food with assistance from supervising adults. While family-style meal service allows students to make choices in selecting foods, the supervising adult should initially offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of each food component (lunch) or food item (breakfast) to each student.

Over the week, offered meals must meet the daily and weekly food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast), and the weekly dietary specifications. However, since replenishment is immediately available at each table, the initial serving of a food component or food item may be less than the full serving. The supervising adult should encourage additional portions and selections to meet the full serving as appropriate, provided the weekly menu does not exceed the USDA’s dietary specifications.

Since OVS requires that students must select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit or vegetable, the supervising adult must ensure that each student selects at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit, vegetable, or combination of both, during the family-style meal service. For additional guidance on family-style meal service, refer to section 4 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and [USDA Memo SP 35-2011 and CACFP 23-2011: Clarification on the Use of Offer versus Serve and Family Style Meal Service](#).

## Salad bars

One of the challenges of food bars is ensuring that students take the minimum required portions for a reimbursable meal. SFAs must ensure that students and staff understand the required selections for a reimbursable meal.

The USDA encourages SFAs to use salad bars in the meal service to offer a wider variety of vegetables and fruits, and lower plate waste. The USDA permits salad bars with OVS because they enhance the choices available, which may assist students with selecting the foods they will consume. While salad bars offer many benefits, they are not a viable option for OVS with some school food service operations. SFAs must consider whether they can successfully implement the requirements for salad bars and ensure that students take the minimum required portions for a reimbursable meal.



There are many ways that schools can incorporate salad bars to facilitate service of reimbursable meals. Salad bars may include food options for the complete reimbursable meal (except for milk) or they may include a food or menu item that is part of a reimbursable meal, depending on the food items available and how they are structured. For example, SFAs could offer the MMA and grains components on the serving line, offer the vegetables and fruits components on a salad bar that is available to all students, and offer a variety of low-fat and fat-free milk choices in the milk cooler.

SFAs can set up salad bars in a variety of ways. One option is providing pre-portioned and pre-packaged food components (lunch) or food items (breakfast) that are “grab-and-go” to accommodate a high volume of students in a short period. Pre-portioning is an acceptable method to ensure that students select an appropriate amount from salad bars.

To allow students and cashiers to easily identify and select reimbursable meals from salad bars, SFAs must follow the requirements below.

- Meet the meal patterns:** When planning a salad bar as part of a reimbursable meal, the servings must be consistent with the meal pattern for the grade group. The planned serving should be an amount that is reasonable for that menu item. For example, 1 cup of lettuce is reasonable but 1 cup of radishes is more than a child would normally consume. To meet the OVS requirements:



- the planned serving of fruits or vegetables must be at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup to credit toward the meal patterns;
- the combined amount of the offered fruits and vegetables must provide the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the vegetables component and the fruits component for each grade group; and
- students must select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables for a reimbursable meal.

For information on the NSLP and SBP meal patterns, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For information on planning menus for the fruits component and vegetables component, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#). For guidance on crediting fruits and vegetables, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

- **Pre-portion foods:** Pre-portioning foods allows staff to quickly identify if students have a reimbursable meal. If foods are not pre-portioned, SFAs must provide appropriate size serving utensils and instruct students on how to select the required meal components and portions. SFAs must also train cashiers to accurately judge the quantities of self-serve foods on student trays so they can determine if the selected foods count toward a reimbursable meal.
- **Post salad bar signage:** Cafeteria signage must indicate which foods and combinations of foods students may select for a reimbursable salad bar meal with OVS. Clearly identify the food components provided on the salad bar and the minimum serving size for each component. For self-service items, place signs at the location of the food on the salad bar as a visual aid to help students determine the minimum serving. For more information, refer to [“Meal Identification Signage”](#) in this section.
- **Provide guidance on minimum portions for fruits and vegetables:** Salad bar signs should indicate the number or amount (using a specific serving utensil) that equals  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables, e.g., eight baby carrots or two scoops of canned fruit. For guidance on the amounts of fruits and vegetables required to provide a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving, refer to the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) and the Start with Half a Cup [Portioning Guide for Fresh Fruits](#) and [Portioning Guide for Fresh Vegetables](#). For more resources, visit the [“Salad Bars”](#) section of the CSDE's [Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.
- **Locate salad bar before the POS:** Salad bars should be located before the POS to ensure that each student's selections from the salad bar meet the required servings for a reimbursable meal. If a school cannot position the salad bar in a location prior to the POS, the SFA may request approval from the CSDE for an alternative system. The alternative system must ensure that all students who use the salad bar select the required food components to meet the meal pattern and OVS requirements. If the salad bar is located after

the POS, the SFA should:

- pre-portion items;
  - instruct students on how to select the required meal components and quantities;
  - provide appropriately sized serving utensils to help students select the required quantities;
  - post visual reminders (such as signs and posters) to help students determine how to select foods; and
  - provide staff to monitor meal selections and ensure that students take the food components in the required serving sizes that were credited at the POS. For younger students, schools could assign student “salad bar ambassadors” to assist in selecting the appropriate size portions from the salad bar.
- **Staff training:** Train cashiers on what constitutes a reimbursable meal at the POS. In addition to regular OVS training, the cafeteria manager should conduct a daily pre-service meeting with all servers and cashiers to review each menu choice and what students must select for a reimbursable meal. For more information, refer to “[Food service staff training](#)” in this section.

In addition to the requirements above, SFAs must ensure that salad bars and other food bars comply with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP). The SFA’s SOPs for salad bars must include appropriate food safety procedures to ensure that foods stay at proper temperatures and are safe from contamination. For examples of SOPs, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition’s (ICN) sample SOPs, [Preventing Contamination at Food Bars](#), and the ICN’s [Standard Operating Procedures](#) webpage.

For additional guidance on salad bars, refer to [USDA Memo SP 41-2019: Salad Bars in the National School Lunch Program](#), and visit the “[Salad Bars](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

These requirements and guidance also apply to other types of food bars, such as pasta bars and baked potato bars.

## OVS Resources

The resources below assist SFAs with implementing OVS. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Offer versus Serve for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

- Meal or No Meal Activity: Breakfast (from *What's for Breakfast: Meeting the Meal Pattern Requirements for the School Breakfast Program*) (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials/Documents>
- Meal or No Meal Activity: Lunch (from *What's for Lunch? Meeting the Meal Pattern Requirements for the National School Lunch Program*) (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials/Documents>
- Overview of OVS in the NSLP (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/Overview\\_OVS\\_NSLP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/Overview_OVS_NSLP.pdf)
- Overview of OVS in the SBP (CSDE):  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/Overview\\_OVS\\_SBP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/Overview_OVS_SBP.pdf)
- OVS Guidance for the NSLP and SBP (USDA):  
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP41-2015av2.pdf>
- OVS Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: National School Lunch Program (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-vs-serve-lunch-program-tip-sheet>
- OVS Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: National School Lunch Program (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-vs-serve-lunch-program-tip-sheet>
- OVS Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: School Breakfast Program (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-vs-serve-breakfast-program-tip-sheet>
- OVS Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: School Breakfast Program (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-vs-serve-breakfast-program-tip-sheet>
- School Breakfast Webinar Part 1: Offer Versus Serve Overview and Strategies for Success (USDA):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-webinar-part-1-offer-versus-serve-overview-and-strategies-success>
- Signage and Posters (CSDE's OVS webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Offer-versus-Serve-for-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Signage>

- USDA Memo SP 41-2015: Updated Offer vs Serve Guidance for the NSLP and SBP Beginning SY 2015-16:  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/updated-offer-vs-serve-guidance-nslp-and-sbp-beginning-sy2015-16>

### Meal Pattern Flexibilities During COVID-19

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the USDA is allowing sponsors to request specific changes to the meal patterns for school year (SY) 2021-22. USDA's memo, [COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #91: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022](#), allows SFAs to request a waiver if they cannot meet the following meal pattern requirements for grades K-12:

- meals must meet the dietary specifications for sodium;
- all grains must be whole grain-rich (WGR);
- menus must offer a variety of vegetables from the vegetable subgroups at lunch;
- menus must offer a variety (at least two different options) of fluid milk;
- low-fat milk must be unflavored; and
- SFAs must plan menus and offer food components for the specified age/grade groups in the stated combinations.

**Sponsors must apply to the CSDE to implement any meal pattern changes.** If approved by the CSDE, this waiver approval remains in effect through June 30, 2022.

The USDA expects that SFAs will use this flexibility only as needed. The CSDE and USDA strongly encourage and expect operators of the Child Nutrition Programs to maintain and meet the meal patterns to the greatest extent possible, as optimal nutrition is even more critical for children during the current COVID-19 public health crisis.

For more information, refer to “[USDA Nationwide Waivers for COVID-19](#)” in the “About this Guide” section and visit the “[How To](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Operation of Child Nutrition Programs during Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Outbreaks](#) webpage.

## Waiver for OVS During COVID-19

Pursuant to [COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #92: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Offer Versus Serve Flexibility for Senior High Schools in School Year 2021-2022](#), the USDA allows SFAs to request a waiver for the requirement to implement OVS for senior high school students. **Sponsors must apply to the CSDE to implement the OVS waiver.** If approved by the CSDE, this waiver approval remains in effect through June 30, 2022.

For more information, refer to “[USDA Nationwide Waivers for COVID-19](#)” in the “About this Guide” section and visit the “[How To](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Operation of Child Nutrition Programs during Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Outbreaks](#) webpage.






## 2 — OVS at Lunch

OVS must be implemented at lunch in senior high schools but is optional for all other grades. OVS is also optional for the SSO. OVS cannot be implemented for the ASP or preschoolers.

OVS applies only to the daily meal pattern requirements. SFAs must offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the five food components. For a reimbursable lunch, students must select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of at least two other food components.

- A **food component** is one of the five food groups that comprise the reimbursable lunch, including milk, MMA, vegetables, fruits, and grains.
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the five food components. It may contain one or more food components, or more than one serving of the same component. For example, a hamburger patty (MMA component) on a whole-grain bun (grains component) is one food item that contains two food components. A selection of three different  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings of fruit (such as peaches, applesauce, and pears) includes three food items from one food component (fruits).

Table 2-1 summarizes the daily meal pattern requirements for lunch and the number of food components that students may decline under OVS.

Table 2-1. Summary of OVS requirements for lunch	
SFA must offer five components <sup>1</sup>	Student may decline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Fruits</li> <li>• Vegetables</li> <li>• Grains (whole grain-rich)</li> <li>• MMA <sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<p>One or two food components but must take at least <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of fruits or vegetables</p> 
<p><sup>1</sup> Each component must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group of the NSLP meal pattern.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Allowable types of milk include unflavored low-fat (1%) milk and unflavored or flavored fat-free milk. SFAs must offer at least two different varieties and at least one milk choice must be unflavored.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> The MMA component must be served in a main dish, or in a main dish and only one other food item.</p>	

## Overview of OVS Requirements for Lunch

For a lunch to be reimbursable under OVS, SFAs must meet the criteria below.

- **Menu planning:** Lunch menus must include five food components (milk, MMA, vegetables, fruits, and grains). The planned serving for each food component must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group in the NSLP meal pattern. The grains, fruits, and vegetables components may be offered in more than one food item. The MMA component must be offered as a main dish, or a main dish and one other food item. Milk must be offered as the full 1-cup serving.
- **Offering a component as two separate food items:** If the lunch menu offers the component's full serving (minimum daily amount) as two separate food items, students must take **both** food items to credit as one component for OVS. For example, if the lunch menu for grades 9-12 provides the required 2 ounce equivalents (oz eq) of MMA from ½ cup of low-fat yogurt (1 oz eq) and 1 ounce of low-fat cheese (1 oz eq), students must select both food items to credit as the MMA component for OVS. The yogurt or cheese stick alone does not credit because each serving is less than 2 oz eq. For more information, refer to “[Offering Food Components as More than One Food Item](#)” in this section.
- **Larger amounts:** SFAs may serve larger amounts of any component if the weekly lunch menu does not exceed the USDA's dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium (refer to the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#)).

SFAs must serve additional grains and MMA on some days to meet the NSLP meal pattern's minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8. For more information, refer to section 4 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

- **Unit pricing:** Meals must be priced as a unit, i.e., students pay the same price regardless of whether they select three, four, or five food components. SFAs must establish one price for a complete reimbursable lunch in the paid meal category and one price for a complete reimbursable lunch in the reduced-price meal category. SFAs may set different unit prices (tiered pricing) for various combinations of foods offered as a reimbursable lunch. However, all students, including those eligible for free and reduced-price meals, must be allowed to select any reimbursable lunch. Lunches with a higher unit price must be available at no cost for all free-eligible students, and at no more than 40 cents for all reduced-eligible students.

- **Identifying reimbursable meals:** SFAs should plan lunch menus to make it easy for students to select (and food service staff to identify) reimbursable meals. SFAs must post signage that clearly communicates the meal components for each menu choice, and indicates what students must select for a reimbursable meal. SFAs should also provide training for school food service staff on the NSLP meal pattern components, including how to recognize reimbursable meals under OVS. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” and “[Food service staff training](#)” in section 1.
- **Required student selections:** Students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving (minimum daily amount) of at least two other food components. Selections of less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as a food item for OVS, unless the student also selects additional fruits or vegetables to provide at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. To encourage selections of reimbursable meals, SFAs should offer all fruits and vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings.
- **Declining foods:** Students may decline any one or two of the required food components, except for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. Students may take smaller portions of the declined food components. However, selections of less than the full serving cannot credit as a food component for OVS.
- **Selecting more than the full serving:** SFAs may allow students to select more than the full serving of any component. However, selections of additional servings from the same component credit as only one component for OVS. For more information, refer to “[Offering Food Components as More than One Food Item](#),” “[Offering Two Food Items that are each the Full Grain Serving](#)” and “[Offering Two Food Items that are each the Full MMA Serving](#)” in this section.

## Offering Each Food Component as One Food Item

SFAs may choose to offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of each food component as one food item. With this menu planning approach, each selection chosen by the student credits as one of the required components for OVS. Table 2-2 shows OVS examples for grades K-5 and 6-8. Table 2-3 shows OVS examples for grades 9-12.



Table 2-2. Offering each component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as one food item				
Planned lunch menu			Meal pattern components	
Turkey (1 ounce) and low-fat cheese (1 ounce)			MMA, 2 oz eq	
Whole-wheat bread, 2 slices (1 ounce each)			Grains (G), 2 oz eq	
Broccoli florets, ¾ cup			Vegetables (V), ¾ cup	
Cantaloupe wedges, ½ cup			Fruits (F), ½ cup	
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup			Milk (M), 1 cup	
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	<b>No.</b> The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F)	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, F).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V)	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V).
Broccoli (V) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The meal contains three full components (V, F, M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The meal contains four full components (MMA, G, V, M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The meal contains four full components (MMA, G, F, M).

**Table 2-3. Offering each component for grades 9-12 as one food item**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Turkey (1 ounce) and low-fat cheese (1 ounce)		MMA, 2 oz eq		
Whole-wheat bread, 2 slices (1 ounce each)		G, 2 oz eq		
Broccoli florets, 1 cup		V, 1 cup		
Cantaloupe wedges, 1 cup		F, 1 cup		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F)	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, F).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V)	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V).
Broccoli florets (V) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four full components (MMA, G, V, M).
Turkey and cheese sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe (F) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four full components (MMA, G, F, M).

## Offering Food Components as More than One Food Item

SFAs may choose to offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of a component as more than one food item. For example, the lunch menu for grades 9-12 could offer the required 1 cup of vegetables from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of broccoli and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn. SFAs may offer components as more than one food item only when:

- each food item provides the minimum creditable serving size ( $\frac{1}{4}$  oz eq for grains and MMA and  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup for fruits and vegetables); and
- the combined amount of the offered food items provides the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group.



SFAs must offer the MMA component as one food item (main dish) or two food items (main dish and one other food item). SFAs must offer the milk component as the full 1-cup serving of fluid milk.

To credit as a food component under OVS, students must select at least the full serving required by the NSLP meal pattern, except for fruits and vegetables. The OVS requirement for fruits and vegetables is at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. Selections of less than the full serving of any other components cannot credit for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings from the same component to meet the required amount. For example, students in grades 9-12 could meet the required 2 oz eq of grains by selecting  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of brown rice (1 oz eq) and a 1-ounce whole-grain roll (1 oz eq).

If the menu offers the minimum daily amount of a meal component as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as one component. SFAs should consider the serving size of menu items and plan lunch menus to make it easy for students to select (and food service staff to identify) reimbursable meals. SFAs must ensure clear communication with students and staff about the NSLP meal pattern requirements and OVS by:

- posting cafeteria signage in all schools that clearly communicates the meal components for all lunch menu choices and indicates what students may select (refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1); and
- providing adequate training for school food service staff on the NSLP meal pattern components, including the required servings for each grade group, how to credit foods, and how to recognize reimbursable meals under OVS (refer to “[Food service staff training](#)” in section 1).

For information on offering the components as more than one item, refer to “[Offering the Full Fruits and Vegetables Components as Two Food Items](#),” “[Offering the Full Grains Component as Two Food Items](#),” and “[Offering the Full MMA Component as Two Food Items](#)” in this section.



Table 2-4 shows OVS examples for grades 9-12 with a lunch menu that offers the minimum daily serving of the MMA component and grains component as two food items.

- **MMA component:** This menu provides the required 2 oz eq of the MMA component from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of yogurt (1 oz eq) and 1 ounce of low-fat Swiss cheese cubes (1 oz eq). Since each food item is less than the full serving, students must take both food items to credit as the MMA component for OVS.
- **Grains component:** This menu provides the required 2 oz eq of the grains component from two 1-oz eq packages of whole-grain crackers. Since each package is less than the full serving, students must take both packages to credit as the grains component for OVS.

### Menu planning considerations

When menus offer the full serving of the grains or MMA components as two separate food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the required amount for a reimbursable meal. SFAs may want to consider other menu planning approaches that encourage selections of reimbursable meals, such as:

- offering combination entrees that provide the full serving of the grains and MMA components (1 oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8 and 2 oz eq for grades 9-12);
- offering all food items from the grains and MMA components in at least the full serving; and
- packaging food items with less than the full serving together, so that students must take both. For example, wrap a 1-oz eq yogurt and a 1-oz eq cheese stick together to provide 2 oz eq for grades 9-12, or wrap two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz eq packages of crackers together to provide 1 oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8.

For more information, refer to “[Menu Planning Tips for OVS at Lunch](#)” at the end of this section.

**Table 2-4. Offering the full serving of grains and MMA  
for grades 9-12 as two separate food items**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Low-fat yogurt, ½ cup		MMA, 1 oz eq		
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 1 ounce		MMA, 1 oz eq (2 oz eq total)		
Whole-grain crackers, two packages (1 oz eq each)		G, 2 oz eq		
Spinach salad, 2 cups <sup>1</sup>		V, 1 cup		
Orange wedges, 1 cup		F, 1 cup		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Crackers, 2 packages (G) Orange wedges (F) Milk (M)	4	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (G, F, M). <sup>3</sup>
Spinach salad (V) Orange wedges (F) Crackers, 2 packages (G)	4	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, G). <sup>3</sup>
Yogurt (1 oz eq MMA) <sup>2</sup> Cheese (1 oz eq MMA) <sup>2</sup> Crackers, 1 package (1 oz eq G) <sup>2</sup> Orange wedges (F) Milk (M)	5	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, F, M). <sup>3</sup>
Yogurt (1 oz eq MMA) <sup>2</sup> Crackers, 2 packages (G) Milk (M)	4	2	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.

Table 2-4, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Yogurt (1 oz eq MMA) <sup>2</sup> Cheese (1 oz eq MMA) <sup>2</sup> Crackers, 1 package (1 oz eq G) <sup>2</sup> Orange wedges (F)	4	2	Yes, but the orange wedges cannot credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F for OVS because they already credit as the full serving of the fruits component. <sup>3</sup>	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two full components (MMA, F). It is missing at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of V or another full component. <sup>3</sup>
Yogurt (1 oz eq MMA) <sup>2</sup> Spinach salad (V) Orange wedges (F)	3	2	Yes, but the orange wedges cannot credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F for OVS because they already credit as the full serving of the fruits component. <sup>3</sup>	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two full components (V, F). It is missing another full component. <sup>3</sup>
<sup>1</sup> Raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served. <sup>2</sup> Selections of less than the full serving cannot credit as a component for OVS. <sup>3</sup> Selections of the full serving of fruits and vegetables credit as either the full component or the minimum $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.				



## Milk Component with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the milk component at lunch. For more information on the NSLP meal pattern requirements for milk, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the “[Milk Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Serving Size for Milk

Milk credits based on volume (fluid ounces). Table 2-5 summarizes the NSLP meal pattern servings for the milk component. The daily amount is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each lunch, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as the milk component for OVS.

Table 2-5. Meal pattern servings for the milk component at lunch			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>1, 2</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	1 cup (8 fluid ounces)	5 cups	7 cups
6-8	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
9-12	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must offer at least two different choices of unflavored or flavored low-fat and fat-free milk. At least one choice must be unflavored milk (refer to “ <a href="#">Milk Variety</a> ” in this section). <sup>2</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.			

### Allowable Types of Milk

The meal patterns for grades K-12 allow unflavored low-fat (1%) milk and unflavored or flavored fat-free milk. Other allowable types of low-fat and fat-free milk include pasteurized lactose-reduced and lactose-free milk; acidified milk; cultured milk; cultured buttermilk; and Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk. SFAs may serve any of these types of milk, as long as they meet the fat content and flavor restrictions.



### Waiver for flavored milk during COVID-19

During the current COVID public health emergency, the USDA is allowing several flexibilities for the NSLP and SBP meal patterns, including a waiver of the requirement that low-fat milk must be unflavored. SFAs that cannot meet the requirement that flavored milk must be fat-free may request a waiver from the CSDE to serve flavored low-fat milk through June 30, 2022. For more information, refer to “[Meal Pattern Flexibilities during COVID-19](#)” in section 1.

### Milk Variety

SFAs must offer at least two different choices of milk at both lunch and breakfast. Choices may include unflavored low-fat milk, unflavored fat-free milk, and flavored fat-free milk.

### State Requirement for Milk

In addition to meeting the USDA meal pattern requirements for the milk component, all milk sold to students in public schools must meet the beverage requirements for milk under [Section 10-221q](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.). The state beverage statute requires that milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce or any artificial sweeteners. These requirements apply to all milk sold to students as part of and separately from reimbursable meals (i.e., a la carte sales). The state beverage statute does not apply to private schools or RCCIs.

Products that meet the federal and state requirements are included on [list 16](#) of the CSDE’s [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage, which contains brand-specific lists of foods that meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) and beverages that meet the requirements of state statute. For more information on the state beverage statute, refer to the CSDE’s [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

### Crediting Milk for OVS

SFAs must offer 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) of fluid milk daily for all grades at lunch. Students must select at least 1 cup of fluid milk to credit as the milk component for OVS.

Fluid milk credits as only one food component for OVS, regardless of how much milk is served or selected. Students are not required to select the milk component for a reimbursable meal.



## Meat/Meat Alternates (MMA) Component with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the MMA component at lunch. For more information on the NSLP meal pattern requirements for the MMA component, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the "[Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Main Dish Requirement for Lunch

SFAs must serve the daily MMA component at lunch in a main dish, or in a main dish and one other food item. The main dish is generally considered the main food item in the menu, which is complemented by the other food items. For example, a lunch menu for grades 9-12 could provide the required 2 oz eq of the MMA component from a sandwich containing 2 ounces of tuna (2 oz eq), or a half sandwich containing 1 ounce of tuna (1 oz eq) served with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of yogurt (1 oz eq). SFAs cannot serve the daily MMA component for lunch in more than two food items.



SFAs must consider how these menu-planning decisions affect students' selection of reimbursable meals when implementing OVS. For example, when a lunch menu provides the daily MMA component as two separate food items, students must select **both** items to credit as the full component for OVS.

### Requirement for recognizable main dish

Foods that are not a main dish do not credit as the MMA component. Examples include soup made with blended soft tofu and muffins made with peanut butter or yogurt. The USDA's intent for this requirement is to ensure that SFAs offer MMA in a form that is recognizable to students. The USDA emphasizes the importance of the nutrition education aspect of school nutrition programs, which includes the goal of helping children easily recognize the key food groups that contribute to a healthy meal.

The USDA allows two exceptions to the requirement for a recognizable main dish.

- Yogurt blended in fruit or vegetable smoothies credits as the MMA component. Other MMA (such as peanut butter) served in smoothies do not credit.
- Pasta made with 100 percent legume flours may credit as the MMA component if the menu also includes an additional meat or meat alternate, such as tofu, cheese, or meat.

## Serving Size for MMA

Table 2-6 summarizes the NSLP meal pattern servings for the MMA component. The daily amount is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each lunch, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as the full MMA component for OVS.

Table 2-6. Meal pattern servings for the MMA component at lunch			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>1,2</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	1 oz eq	8 oz eq	11 oz eq
6-8	1 oz eq <sup>1</sup>	9 oz eq	12½ oz eq
9-12	2 oz eq	10 oz eq	14 oz eq
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must serve additional MMA on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and grades 6-8. For grades 9-12, the minimum weekly requirement is the sum of the minimum daily requirement.			
<sup>2</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.			

A menu item must provide at least ¼ oz eq of cooked lean meat or equivalent to credit toward the MMA component. If the amount of meat or meat alternate is less than the full serving (minimum daily amount), the menu must include an additional MMA to meet the full serving for each grade group. SFAs can offer the MMA component by itself (such as grilled chicken or yogurt) or in a combination food, such as hamburger on a WGR bun, turkey sandwich on a whole-wheat roll, and pizza made with WGR crust. To credit as the MMA component for OVS, the amount selected by the student must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for the grade group.

The amounts in the MMA component refer to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* indicates that lean meat and poultry contains less than 10 grams of fat,

no more than 4.5 grams of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 100 grams and per labeled serving size, based on the USDA's definitions for food label use. Examples include 95 percent lean cooked ground beef, beef top round steak or roast, beef tenderloin, pork top loin chop or roast, pork tenderloin, ham or turkey deli slices, skinless chicken breast, and skinless turkey breast.

A 1-oz eq serving of the MMA component equals:

- 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish;
- 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended);
- 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread, or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended);
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chickpeas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas;
- $\frac{1}{2}$  large egg;
- 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, and sunflower seed butter;
- 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts;
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein;
- 1 ounce of tempeh that contains specific ingredients;
- 3 ounces of surimi;
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of yogurt or soy yogurt; and
- 1 ounce of APP that meets the USDA's APP requirements (appendix A of the NSLP and SBP regulations).



For guidance on the crediting requirements for tofu, tempeh, surimi, and APPs, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [\*Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12\*](#).

## Offering the Full MMA Component as Two Food Items

When the lunch menu offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the MMA component as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as the full component for OVS. Selections of less than the full serving cannot credit.

Whether a student's selection credits as the MMA component for OVS depends on the amount the student selects and the required oz eq for each grade group. The required oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8 are different from the required oz eq for grades 9-12.

When menus offer the full serving of the MMA component as two separate food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the full amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. SFAs must consider how the menu offerings affect reimbursable meals under OVS. A better menu planning approach is to offer all MMA choices in at least the minimum daily serving, or package both items together, so that any student selection credits as the MMA component for OVS.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-7 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 offers the full 1-oz eq serving of MMA component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 1 oz eq of MMA from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of low-fat yogurt ( $\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq) and a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce low-fat cheese stick ( $\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq). Students must take both food items to credit as the MMA component for OVS. The yogurt or cheese stick alone cannot credit as the full MMA component because each serving is less than 1 oz eq.



**Table 2-7. Offering 1 oz eq of MMA for grades K -5 and 6-8  
as two separate ½-oz eq food items**

**Required daily serving: 1 oz eq <sup>1</sup>**

<b>Planned MMA component</b>		<b>Meal pattern contribution</b>		
Yogurt, ¼ cup		½ oz eq	(1 oz eq total)	
Low-fat cheese stick, ½ ounce		½ oz eq		
<b>Student selects</b>	<b>Oz eq</b>	<b>OVS contribution (full component)</b>	<b>Credits as full MMA component?</b> <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	<b>Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal</b>
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat cheese stick	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq for the MMA component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	½	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.
Low-fat cheese stick	½	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must serve additional MMA on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch (refer to <a href="#">table 2-6</a> ).				

## Grades 9-12

Table 2-8 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers the full 2-oz eq of MMA as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides the required 2 oz eq of MMA from ½ cup of low-fat yogurt (1 oz eq) and a 1-ounce low-fat cheese stick (1 oz eq). Students must take both food items to credit as the MMA component for OVS. The yogurt or cheese stick alone cannot credit as the full MMA component because each serving is less than 2 oz eq.

Table 2-8. Offering 2 oz eq of MMA for grades 9-12 as two separate 1-oz eq food items				
Required daily serving: 2 oz eq				
Planned MMA component			Meal pattern contribution	
Yogurt, ½ cup			1 oz eq	(2 oz eq total)
Low-fat cheese stick, 1 ounce			1 oz eq	
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 2 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat cheese stick	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	1	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 2 oz eq of MMA. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.
Low-fat cheese stick	1	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 2 oz eq of MMA. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.



## Offering Two Food Items that are each the Full MMA Serving

When the lunch menu offers the MMA component as two separate food items that each provide the full serving (minimum daily amount), students may select either food item to credit as the full component for OVS. Selections of more than the full serving (such as a 2-oz eq chicken patty for grades K-5 or 6-8, or a 3-oz eq chicken patty for grades 9-12) credit as only one component.

SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-9 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 offers more than the full 1-oz eq serving of the MMA component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 2 oz eq of MMA from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of low-fat yogurt (1 oz eq) and 1 ounce of low-fat Swiss cheese cubes (1 oz eq). Students may take the yogurt and cheese together, or either one alone, to credit as the MMA component for OVS.



**Table 2-9. Offering more than the full MMA component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two separate food items**

**Required daily serving: 1 oz eq <sup>1</sup>**

Planned MMA component			Meal pattern contribution	
Yogurt, ½ cup			1 oz eq	
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 1 ounce			1 oz eq	(2 oz eq total)
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must serve additional MMA on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch (refer to [table 2-6](#)).

### Grades 9-12

Table 2-10 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers more than the full 2-oz eq serving of the MMA component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 4 oz eq of MMA from 1 cup of low-fat yogurt (2 oz eq) and 2 ounces of low-fat Swiss cheese cubes (2 oz eq). Students may take the yogurt and cheese together, or either one alone, to credit as the MMA component for OVS.

Table 2-10. Offering more than the full MMA component for grades 9-12 as two separate 2-oz eq food items				
Required daily serving: 2 oz eq				
Planned MMA component			Meal pattern contribution	
Yogurt, 1 cup			2 oz eq	(4 oz eq total)
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, 2 ounces			2 oz eq	
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 2 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Low-fat yogurt Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	4	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 2 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the full serving size credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat yogurt	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese Cubes	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.

## Offering More than the Full MMA Component as Two Food Items with Different Oz Eq

Students must select the full serving (minimum daily amount) to credit as the MMA component for OVS. Selections of less than the full serving cannot credit as a food component for OVS. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS. Whether a student's choice credits as the MMA component for OVS depends on the planned menu and the required oz eq for each grade group.

When menus offer the full serving of the MMA component as two separate food items with different oz eq, it might be more difficult for students to select the full amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. SFAs must consider how the menu offerings affect reimbursable meals under OVS. A better menu planning approach is to offer MMA in at least the minimum daily serving, or package both items together, so that any student selection credits as the MMA component for OVS.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-11 shows OVS examples with a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that offers more than the full 1 oz-eq serving of the MMA component from two separate food items with different oz eq. This menu provides 2 oz eq of MMA from  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of bean soup ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce of low-fat cheese cubes ( $\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq). Students may take the bean soup and cheese cubes together, or the bean soup alone, to credit as the MMA component for OVS. The cheese cubes alone cannot credit as the MMA component because the serving is less than 1 oz eq.



**Table 2-11. Offering more than the full MMA component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two separate food items with different oz eq**

**Required daily serving: 1 oz eq <sup>1</sup>**

**Planned MMA component**

Bean soup,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup <sup>2</sup>

Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce

**Meal pattern contribution**

$1\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq

(2 oz eq total)

Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Bean soup Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Bean soup	$1\frac{1}{2}$	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	$\frac{1}{2}$	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must serve additional MMA on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch (refer to [table 2-6](#)).

### Grades 9-12

Table 2-12 shows OVS examples with a lunch menu for grades 9-12 that offers more than the full 2-oz eq serving of the MMA component from two separate food items with different oz eq. This menu provides 3 oz eq of MMA from 1 cup of bean soup (2 oz eq) and 1 ounce of low-fat cheese cubes (1 oz eq). Students may take the bean soup and cheese cubes together, or the bean soup alone, to credit as the MMA component for OVS. The cheese cubes alone cannot credit as the full MMA component because the serving is less than 2 oz eq.

Table 2-12. Offering more than the full MMA component for grades 9-12 as two separate food items with different oz eq				
Required daily serving: 2 oz eq				
Planned MMA component			Meal pattern contribution	
Bean soup, 1 cup <sup>2</sup>			2 oz eq	(2½ oz eq total)
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes, ½ ounce			½ oz eq	
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 2 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Bean soup Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	2½	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 2 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Bean soup	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Low-fat Swiss cheese cubes	½	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.



## Offering Entree Choices with Different Oz Eq

If the lunch menu offers a variety of daily entrees choices with different oz eq., only the entrees that contain the full serving (minimum daily amount) credit as the MMA component for OVS. Table 2-13 show examples of OVS when a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 allows students to choose from entree selections with different oz eq. Table 2-14 show examples for grades 9-12.

The planned lunch menu includes four entree choices that each provide at least 2 oz eq of MMA. Two choices provide the MMA component in one food item (main dish) and two choices split the MMA component into two different food items (main dish and side item).

- **Beef stew:** One main dish food item that credits as 3 oz eq of MMA from 3 ounces of cooked beef.
- **Roast chicken:** One main dish food item that credits as 2 oz eq of MMA from 2 ounces of cooked chicken.
- **Peanut butter sandwich (main dish) and cheese cubes (side item):** Two food items that provide 2 oz eq of MMA from 3 tablespoons of peanut butter (1½ oz eq) and ½-ounce low-fat cheese cubes (½ oz eq).
- **Chickpea salad (main dish) and yogurt (side item):** Two food items that provide 2 oz eq of MMA from ¼ cup of chickpeas (1 oz eq) and ½ cup of yogurt (1 oz eq).

The NSLP meal pattern requires 1 oz eq of MMA for grade K-5 and 6-8, and 2 oz eq for grades 9-12. Since each entree choice provides at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for all grade groups, students may select any entree to credit as the MMA component for OVS. However, if a student selects only one of the two food items from the split entrees, some choices are less than the full serving and cannot credit as the MMA component for OVS.

For example, if a student selects only the peanut butter sandwich (1½ oz eq) or only the chickpea salad (1 oz eq), the selection credits as the MMA component for grades K-5 and 6-8 (refer to table 2-13) but not for grades 9-12 (refer to table 2-14). SFAs must consider how entrees with different oz eq affect reimbursable meals under OVS.



Table 2-13. Offering different oz eq entree choices for grades K-5 and 6-8

Required daily serving: 1 oz eq				
Student selects	Oz eq <sup>1</sup>	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Beef stew (3 oz eq)	3	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component. <b>Note:</b> If the beef stew provides at least ½ cup of vegetables, the student only needs to select the full serving of at least one other component.
Roast chicken (2 oz eq)	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.



Table 2-13, *continued*

Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Chickpea salad (1 oz eq) Yogurt (1 oz eq)	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component. The chickpea salad cannot credit as the vegetables component because it already credits as the MMA component.
Peanut butter sandwich (1½ oz eq of peanut butter) Low-fat cheese cubes (½ oz eq)	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component. <b>Note:</b> If the bread on the sandwich provides at least 2 oz eq of the grains component, the student only needs to select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS for commercial products or a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” in section 1).

Table 2-14. Offering different oz eq entree choices for grades 9-12

Required daily serving: 2 oz eq				
Student selects	Oz eq <sup>1</sup>	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Beef stew (3 oz eq)	3	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 2 oz eq of MMA. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component. <b>Note:</b> If the beef stew provides at least ½ cup of vegetables, the student only needs to select the full serving of at least one other component.
Roast chicken (2 oz eq)	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Chickpea salad (1 oz eq) Yogurt (1 oz eq)	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq of MMA.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component. The chickpea salad cannot credit as the vegetables component because it already credits as the MMA component.

Table 2-14, *continued*

Student selects	Oz eq <sup>1</sup>	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full MMA component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Peanut butter sandwich (1½ oz eq of peanut butter)  Low-fat cheese cubes (½ oz eq)	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is more than the required 2 oz eq for the MMA component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component. <b>Note:</b> If the bread on the sandwich provides at least 1 oz eq of the grains component, the student only needs to select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS for commercial products or a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” in section 1).





## Vegetables Component and Fruits Component with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the fruits component and vegetables component at lunch. For more information on the NSLP meal pattern requirements for fruits and vegetables, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the [“Vegetables Component for Grades K-12”](#) section and [“Fruits Component for Grades K-12”](#) section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and rehydrated dried vegetables; and pasteurized full-strength vegetable juice. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. For example, a serving of canned corn cannot include the water in which it is packed; and a serving of baked beans cannot include the sauce in which it is packed. Dried vegetables (such as potato flakes) credit when rehydrated only if the manufacturer's product formulation statement (PFS) provides specific documentation on the amount of vegetables per serving.

The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, canned (in light syrup, water, or fruit juice), and dried fruits; and pasteurized full-strength fruit juice. A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed but cannot include water or syrup. Juice in canned fruit that credits as the fruits component also counts toward the weekly juice limit. For more information, refer to [“Weekly Juice Limit at Lunch”](#) in this section.



## Serving Size for Vegetables

A menu item must provide at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of vegetables to credit toward part of the vegetables component. If the amount of vegetables is less than the minimum daily amount, the planned lunch menu must include additional vegetables to meet the full serving for each grade group. A student's selection of amounts less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup do not credit toward the OVS requirement.



Vegetables credit based on volume (cups), except raw leafy greens such as kale, greens (e.g., beet, collard, mustard, and turnip), spinach, arugula, and lettuce (e.g., iceberg, romaine, Boston, Bibb, red leaf, and spring mix). Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served. For example, 1 cup of lettuce credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the vegetable component.

Table 2-15 summarizes the NSLP meal pattern servings for the vegetables component. The daily amount is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each lunch, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as the vegetables component for OVS. However, a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

Table 2-15. Meal pattern servings for the vegetables component at lunch			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>1</sup>	Minimum weekly serving <sup>2</sup>	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	$3\frac{3}{4}$ cups	$5\frac{1}{4}$ cups
6-8	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	$3\frac{3}{4}$ cups	$5\frac{1}{4}$ cups
9-12	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
<sup>1</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. <sup>2</sup> The lunch meal pattern requires minimum weekly servings of five vegetable subgroups (dark green, red/orange, starchy, legumes, and other). Students are not required to select each subgroup but SFAs must provide the opportunity for students to select each subgroup. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, <i>Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP</i> .			

## Serving Size for Fruits

A menu item must provide at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of fruit to credit toward part of the fruits component. If the amount of fruit is less than the minimum daily amount, the planned lunch menu must include additional fruits to meet the full serving for each grade group. A student's selection of amounts less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup do not credit toward the OVS requirement.

All fruits credit based on volume (cups) except for dried fruit such as raisins, apricots, dried cherries, dried cranberries, dried blueberries, and mixed dried fruit. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served. For example,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dried fruit credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component.



Table 2-16 summarizes the NSLP meal pattern servings for the fruits component. The daily amount is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each lunch, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as the fruits component for OVS. However, a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

**Table 2-16. Meal pattern servings for the fruits component at lunch**

Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>1</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups
6-8	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups
9-12	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups

<sup>1</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.



## Weekly Juice Limit at Lunch

For example, if a five-day lunch menu for grades K-5 offers 2½ cups of the fruits component over the week, the lunch menu may offer up to 1¼ cups of juice over the week. If the weekly menu includes larger amounts of fruits and vegetables, the weekly juice limit also increases. For example, if a five-day lunch menu for grades K-5 offers 4 cups of the fruits component over the week, the lunch menu may offer up to 2 cups of juice over the week.

SFAs must count all sources of 100 percent juice available to students during the week toward the weekly juice limit, including:

- juice that is fresh, frozen or made from concentrate;
- frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice;
- pureed fruits and vegetables in fruit/vegetable smoothies; and
- juice from canned fruit served in 100 percent juice, unless the canned fruit is drained or served as an extra food. Drained fruit and canned fruit in light syrup or water do not count toward the weekly juice limit.



The meal patterns allow a serving of canned fruit to include the juices in which it is packed. For example, canned peaches ( $\frac{3}{8}$  cup) in juice ( $\frac{1}{8}$  cup) credit as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component. The juice from canned fruit counts toward the weekly juice limit if the SFA credits the juice toward the fruits component. However, juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit if the SFA plans the juice as an extra food that does not credit toward the meal patterns. For example, if food service personnel portion  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of canned fruit in a 5½-ounce container, then add the juice after measuring the full  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of fruit, the juice does not count toward the weekly juice limit.

For more information on crediting juice, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#), and sections 3 and 4 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

## Assorted Juice Choices at Lunch

When the daily lunch menu offers 1 cup of fruit (such as a lunch menu for grades 9-12), schools cannot offer and students cannot select more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of juice. If SFAs allow students to select two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings from a variety of daily fruit and juice choices, students may select either two fruits, or one fruit and one juice. **Students cannot select two servings of juice because this exceeds the weekly juice limit.**

Each school's lunch menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate the amount of juice that students may select with each meal. For more information, refer to "[Assorted Juice Choice at Breakfast](#)" in section 3.

## Planned and Selected Servings of Fruits and Vegetables

Except for the fruits component for grades K-5 and 6-8, the planned serving size for the fruits and vegetables components is not the same as the serving size that students must select for a reimbursable meal. Table 2-17 summarizes the menu planning and OVS requirements for the fruits and vegetables components at lunch.

Table 2-17. Menu planning and OVS requirements for servings of fruits and vegetables at lunch		
Grade group	Menu planning <i>SFA must plan and offer</i>	OVS <i>Student must select</i>
K-5 and 6-8	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetables	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables
9-12	1 cup of fruits 1 cup of vegetables	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables

SFAs must always plan and offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the fruits and vegetables components for each grade group (refer to tables 2-6 and 2-7). However, students are not required to select the full-planned serving of fruits and vegetables. For a reimbursable meal under OVS, students must select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables, fruit, or a combination of both; and the full serving of at least two components.





For example, a student's selection of any one of the following meets the required  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits and vegetables for OVS:

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of one individual fruit;
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of mixed fruits, e.g., fruit salad;
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dried fruit (credits as twice the volume served);
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of one individual vegetable;
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of mixed vegetables, e.g., peas and carrots;
- 1 cup of salad greens (credits as half the volume served);
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup combination of fruits and vegetables, e.g.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of fruit and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of vegetable; or
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of mixed fruits and vegetables, e.g., carrot-pineapple-raisin salad.

Dried fruit and raw leafy greens credit toward the OVS requirements based on their meal pattern crediting volume. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served. For example, a student's selection of  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dried fruit credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component. Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served. For example, a student's selection of 1 cup of raw leafy greens credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the vegetables component.





## Crediting Selections of Fruits and Vegetables

Whether a student's selection of fruits or vegetables credits as the full component or the minimum ½-cup serving for OVS depends on the amount the student selects and the required serving for each grade group.

- **Full serving:** Selections of the full serving (minimum daily amount) of either fruits or vegetables credit as one component for OVS. **The selection credits as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup serving but not both in the same meal.** For example, the NSLP meal pattern for grades K-5 and 6-8 requires ½ cup of the fruits component. A student who selects ½ cup of fruit (full component) must also select the full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of vegetables (OVS requirement) and the full serving of at least one other component.



- **More than full serving:** Selections of more than the minimum daily serving of the fruits component or vegetables component credit as only one component for OVS. For example, the NSLP meal pattern for grades K-5 and 6-8 requires ¾ cup of vegetables. A student's selection of 1 cup of vegetables credits as one component. For a reimbursable meal, the student must select the full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of fruit (OVS requirement) and the full serving of at least one other component. For more information, refer to "[Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)" in this section.
- **½-cup serving:** Selections of at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables meet the OVS requirement. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select the full serving of at least two other components.
- **Less than ½-cup serving:** Selections of less than ½ cup of fruits or vegetables cannot credit toward the OVS requirements, unless they are combined with additional servings from either the fruits component or vegetables component to meet the minimum requirement. **Meals without at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables are not reimbursable.** Schools may charge a la carte prices for the selected foods. For more information, refer to "[A La Carte Sales](#)" in section 1. To encourage selections of reimbursable meals at the POS, food service staff should allow students to return to the serving line and select additional fruits or vegetables. Another strategy is making fruit and vegetable selections at the POS. For example, the cashier's station could have a basket of assorted whole fruits and bags of cut vegetables.

Table 2-18 shows examples of crediting a student's fruit selections with OVS.

Table 2-18. Crediting fruit selections with OVS at lunch					
Grade group	Full serving (minimum daily amount)	Student selects	Credits as full component?	Credits as ½ cup for OVS?	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
K-5 and 6-8	½ cup	½ cup	Yes <sup>1</sup>	Yes <sup>1</sup>	The full serving of at least two other components, or the full serving of one other component and at least ½ cup of vegetables.
9-12	1 cup	½ cup	No	Yes	The full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables.
<sup>1</sup> Selections of the full serving credit as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.					



Tables 2-19 show examples of crediting a student's vegetable selections with OVS.

Table 2-19. Crediting vegetable selections with OVS at lunch					
Grade group	Full serving (minimum daily amount)	Student selects	Credits as full component?	Credits as ½ cup for OVS?	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
K-5 and 6-8	¾ cup	½ cup	No	Yes	The full serving of at least two other components, or the full serving of one other component and at least ½ cup of fruit.
9-12	1 cup	½ cup	No	Yes	The full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit.



## Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables

If the SFA allows students to select more than the full serving (minimum daily amount) of fruits or vegetables, the selection credits as only one of the three required components for OVS. For example, a student in grades 9-12 selects 1½ cups of fruit salad (one component). For a reimbursable meal, the student must also select the full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of vegetables and the full serving of one other component.

Table 2-20 shows examples of how to credit selections of multiple servings of the fruits component and vegetables component with OVS at lunch.

<b>Grade group</b>	<b>Full serving (minimum daily amount)</b>	<b>Student selects</b>	<b>Number of components</b>	<b>Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal</b>
K-5 and 6-8	<b>Fruits:</b> ½ cup	Two ½-cup servings of fruit salad (1 cup)	1	The full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of vegetables and the full serving of one other component.
K-5 and 6-8	<b>Vegetables:</b> ¾ cup	Two ½-cup servings of corn (1 cup)	1	The full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of fruit and the full serving of one other component.
9-12	<b>Fruits:</b> 1 cup	1½ cups of fruit salad	1	The full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of vegetables and the full serving of one other component.
9-12	<b>Vegetables:</b> 1 cup	3 cups of salad (credits as 1½ cups of vegetables)	1	The full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of fruit and the full serving of one other component.

## Offering the Full Fruits Component as Two Food Items

When the lunch menu offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the fruits component as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as the fruits component for OVS at lunch. Selections of amounts less than the full serving cannot credit as the fruits component. However, a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup selection meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

Whether a student's selection credits as the fruits component for OVS depends on the amount the student selects and the required serving for each grade group. The required servings for grades K-5 and 6-8 are different from the required servings for grades 9-12.



### Grades K-5 and 6-8

The NSLP meal pattern for grades K-5 and 6-8 requires at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component. Table 2-21 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu offers the full serving of the fruits component as two separate food items. This menu provides the required  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of strawberries and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of oranges. Students must take both food items to credit as the full fruits component or meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. The strawberries or oranges alone cannot credit because each serving is less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select both fruit servings (full component) must also select either:

- the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of vegetables; or
- at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables and the full serving of at least one other component.

Students who select only the strawberries ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup) or oranges ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup) must also select at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.

When menus offer the full serving of the fruits component as two separate food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is to offer all fruit choices in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings so that any student selection contains at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component for OVS.

**Table 2-21. Offering the full fruits component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two food items**

**Required daily serving: ½ cup**

<b>Planned fruits component</b>		<b>Meal pattern contribution</b>		
Strawberries, ¼ cup		¼ cup		
Oranges, ¼ cup		¼ cup (½ cup total)		
<b>Student Selects</b>	<b>Cups</b>	<b>Credits as at least ½ cup of fruit for OVS?</b>	<b>Credits as full fruits component? <i>Must be at least ½ cup</i></b>	<b>Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal</b>
Strawberries Oranges	½	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required ½-cup serving for the fruits component and the minimum ½-cup serving for OVS.	The full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of vegetables and the full serving of at least one other component.
Strawberries	¼	No	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required ½-cup serving for the fruits component and the minimum ½-cup serving for OVS. Selections of less than ½ cup cannot credit for OVS.	At least ¼ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of at least two other components.
Oranges	¼	No	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required ½-cup serving for the fruits component and the minimum ½-cup serving for OVS. Selections of less than ½ cup cannot credit for OVS.	At least ¼ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of at least two other components.



**Grades 9-12**

The NSLP meal pattern for grades 9-12 requires at least 1 cup of the fruits component. Table 2-22 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers the full serving of the fruits component as two separate food items. This menu provides the required 1 cup of the fruit from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of strawberries and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of oranges. Students must take both food items to credit as the full fruits component. The strawberries or oranges alone cannot credit as the full fruits component because each serving is less than 1 cup. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select both fruit servings (full component) must also select either:

- the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables; or
- at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables and the full serving of at least one other component.

Students who select only the strawberries ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) or oranges ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) must also select the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables.



Table 2-22. Offering the full fruits component for grades 9-12 as two food items

Required daily serving: 1 cup				
Planned fruits component		Meal pattern contribution		
Strawberries, ½ cup		½ cup	(1 cup total)	
Oranges, ½ cup		½ cup		
Student Selects	Cups	Credits as at least ½ cup of fruit for OVS?	Credits as full fruits component? <i>Must be at least ½ cup</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Strawberries Oranges	1	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1-cup serving for the fruits component and <b>more</b> than the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.	The full serving of at least two other components, or at least ½ cup of vegetables and the full serving of at least one other component.
Strawberries	½	Yes	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1-cup serving for the fruits component but the <b>same</b> as the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.	The full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables.
Oranges	½	Yes	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1-cup serving for the fruits component but the <b>same</b> as the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.	The full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of vegetables.

## Offering the Full Vegetables Component as Two Food Items

When the lunch menu offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the vegetables component as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as the full vegetables component for OVS at lunch. Selections of amounts less than the full serving cannot credit as the vegetables component. However, a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup selection meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

Whether a student's selection credits as the vegetables component for OVS depends on the amount the student selects and the required serving for each grade group. The required servings for grades K-5 and 6-8 are different from the required servings for grades 9-12.



### Grades K-5 and 6-8

The NSLP meal pattern for grades K-5 and 6-8 requires at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of the vegetables component. Table 2-23 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu offers the full serving of the vegetables component as two separate food items. This menu provides the required  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of the vegetables component from  $\frac{3}{8}$  cup of carrot sticks and  $\frac{3}{8}$  cup of green peas. Students must take both food items to credit as the full vegetables component, or meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. The carrots or peas alone cannot credit as the full vegetables component because each serving is less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select both vegetable servings (full component) must also select the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit. Students who select only the carrots ( $\frac{3}{8}$  cup) or peas ( $\frac{3}{8}$  cup) must also select at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of fruit, and the full serving of two other components.

When menus offer the full serving of the vegetables component as two separate food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is to offer all vegetable choices in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings so that any student selection meets the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup requirement for OVS.

**Table 2-23. Offering the full vegetables component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two food items**

Required daily serving: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup				
Planned vegetables component		Meal pattern contribution		
Carrots, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup		$\frac{3}{8}$ cup		
Green peas, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup		$\frac{3}{8}$ cup ( $\frac{3}{4}$ cup total)		
Student Selects	Cups	Credits as at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables for OVS?	Credits as full vegetables component? <i>Must be at least <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Carrot sticks Green peas	$\frac{3}{4}$	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup serving for the vegetables component and <b>more</b> than the minimum $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving for OVS.	At least two other components, one of which could be $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit.
Carrot sticks	$\frac{3}{8}$	No	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup serving for the vegetables component and the minimum $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving for OVS. Selections of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cannot credit for OVS.	At least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of two other components.
Green peas	$\frac{3}{8}$	No	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup serving for the vegetables component and the minimum $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving for OVS. Selections of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cannot credit for OVS.	At least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of two other components.

**Grades 9-12**

The NSLP meal pattern for grades 9-12 requires at least 1 cup of the vegetables component. Table 2-24 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers the full serving of the vegetables requirement as two separate food items. This menu provides the required 1 cup of vegetables from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of carrot sticks and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of green peas. Students must take both food items to credit as the full vegetables component. The carrots or peas alone cannot credit as the full vegetables component because each serving is less than 1 cup. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select both vegetable servings (full component) must also select either:

- the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit; or
- at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit and the full serving of at least one other component.

Students who select only the carrots ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) or peas ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) must also select the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit.



**Table 2-24. Offering the full vegetables component for grades 9-12 as two food items**

**Required daily serving: 1 cup**

<b>Planned vegetables component</b>		<b>Meal pattern contribution</b>		
Carrots, ½ cup		½ cup	(1 cup total)	
Green peas, ½ cup		½ cup		
<b>Student Selects</b>	<b>Cups</b>	<b>Credits as at least ½ cup of vegetables for OVS?</b>	<b>Credits as full vegetables component?</b> <i>Must be at least ½ cup</i>	<b>Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal</b>
Carrot sticks Green peas	1	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1-cup serving for the vegetables component and <b>more</b> than the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.	At least two other components, or at least ½ cup of fruit and the full serving of at least one other component.
Carrot sticks	½	Yes	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1-cup serving for the vegetables component but the <b>same</b> as the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.	The full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit.
Green peas	½	Yes	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1-cup serving for the vegetables component but the <b>same</b> as the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.	The full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit.



## Offering the Full Fruits and Vegetables Components as Two Food Items

When the lunch menu offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of both the fruits and vegetables components as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as the fruits or vegetables component for OVS at lunch. Selections of amounts less than the full serving cannot credit as the full component. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

Whether a student's selection credits as the full component for OVS depends on the amount the student selects and the required serving for each grade group. The required servings for grades K-5 and 6-8 are different from the required servings for grades 9-12.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

The NSLP meal pattern for grades K-5 and 6-8 requires at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of the vegetables component and at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component. Table 2-25 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu offers the full serving of the vegetables component as two food items with different serving sizes and the full serving of the fruits component as two separate food items with the same serving size.

- **Vegetables component:** This menu provides the required  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of vegetables from  $\frac{3}{8}$  cup of tomato sauce in the vegetable pizza and  $\frac{3}{8}$  cup of coleslaw. The vegetable pizza or coleslaw alone cannot credit as the full vegetables component because each serving is less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup. Students must take both food items to credit as the full vegetables component or meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Fruits component:** This menu provides the required  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of green grapes and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of applesauce. Students must take both food items to credit as the full fruits component, or meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. The green grapes or applesauce alone cannot credit as the full fruits component because each serving is less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup.

For more information, refer to “[Selections of Only Fruits, Vegetables, and One Other Component](#)” in this section.

When menus offer the full serving of the vegetables and fruits components for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two separate food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is to offer all fruits and vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings, so that any student selection meets the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup requirement for OVS



**Table 2-25. Offering the full fruits component and full vegetables component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two food items**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Cheese and vegetable pizza, 1 slice <sup>1</sup> (1½ ounces of low-fat mozzarella cheese) WGR pizza crust, 2 ounces		MMA, 1½ oz eq G, 2 oz eq		
Coleslaw, ⅜ cup Tomato sauce and vegetables on pizza, ⅜ cup		V, ⅜ cup V, ⅜ cup (¾ cup total)		
Green grapes, ¼ cup Applesauce, ¼ cup		F, ¼ cup F, ¼ cup (½ cup total)		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Pizza (MMA, G, ⅜ cup V <sup>2</sup> )	1	2	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (MMA, G) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Applesauce (¼ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Grapes (¼ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Milk (M)	3	2	Yes, but the fruit servings cannot credit as ½ cup of F for OVS because they already credit as the full serving of F. <sup>3</sup>	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two full components (F, M). It is missing at least ½ cup of V or another full component.
Pizza (MMA, G, ⅜ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Coleslaw (⅜ cup V) <sup>2</sup>	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V).

Table 2-25, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Pizza (MMA, G, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Grapes ( $\frac{1}{4}$ cup F) <sup>2</sup>	2	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (MMA, G) and $\frac{5}{8}$ cup of V and F combined ( $\frac{3}{8}$ cup of vegetables on pizza and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of green grapes).
Pizza (MMA, G, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Milk (M)	2	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V.
Pizza (MMA, G, $\frac{3}{8}$ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Grapes ( $\frac{1}{4}$ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Coleslaw ( $\frac{3}{8}$ cup V) <sup>2</sup>	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V).

- <sup>1</sup> SFAs must document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS for commercial products or a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” in section 1).
- <sup>2</sup> Selections of less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit for OVS. To encourage selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits and vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings.
- <sup>3</sup> Selections of the full serving of fruits and vegetables credit as either the full component or the minimum  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.



## Grades 9-12

The NSLP meal pattern for grades 9-12 requires at least 1 cup of the vegetables component and at least 1 cup of the fruits component. Table 2-26 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of each component as two separate food items.

- **Vegetables component:** This menu provides the required 1 cup of vegetables from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of tomato sauce in the vegetable pizza and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of coleslaw. Students must take both food items to credit as the full vegetables component for OVS. The vegetable pizza or coleslaw alone cannot credit as the full vegetables component because each serving is less than 1 cup. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Fruits component:** This menu provides the required 1 cup of fruit from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of green grapes and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of applesauce. Students must take both food items to credit as the full fruits component. The green grapes or applesauce alone cannot credit as the full fruits component because each serving is less than 1 cup. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

For more information, refer to “[Selections of Only Fruits, Vegetables, and One Other Component](#)” in this section.



**Table 2-26. Offering the full fruits component and full vegetables component for grades 9-12 as two food items**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Cheese and vegetable pizza, 1 slice <sup>1</sup> (2 ounces of low-fat mozzarella cheese) WGR pizza crust, 3 ounces		MMA, 2 oz eq G, 3 oz eq		
Coleslaw, ½ cup Tomato sauce and vegetables on pizza, ½ cup		V, ½ cup V, ½ cup	(1 cup total)	
Green grapes, ½ cup Applesauce, ½ cup		F, ½ cup F, ½ cup	(1 cup total)	
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Pizza (MMA, G, ½ cup V <sup>2</sup> )	1	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (MMA, G) and ½ cup of V.
Applesauce (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Green grapes (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Milk (M)	3	2	Yes, but the fruit servings cannot credit as ½ cup of F for OVS because they already credit as the full serving of the fruits component. <sup>3</sup>	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two full components (F, M). It is missing at least ½ cup of vegetables or another full component. Selections of the full serving of fruits or vegetables credit as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.

Table 2-26, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Pizza (MMA, G, ½ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Green grapes (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup>	2	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (MMA, G) and 1 cup of V and F combined.
Pizza (MMA, G, ½ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Coleslaw (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup>	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V).
Pizza (MMA, G, ½ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Milk (M)	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) and ½ cup of V.
Pizza (MMA, G, ½ cup V <sup>2</sup> ) Green grapes (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Coleslaw (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup>	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V) and ½ cup of F.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS for commercial products or a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” in section 1).

<sup>2</sup> Selections of ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as the full 1-cup component but meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

Table 2-27 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu offers the full serving of the vegetables component as two separate food items with different serving sizes. This menu provides the required  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of the vegetables component from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of tomato and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of carrot sticks. The  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of lettuce does not credit because raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served. A  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving of lettuce is required to provide minimum creditable amount of  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup.



**Table 2-27. Offering the full fruits component and full vegetables component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two food items with different serving sizes**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Cheeseburger, 1½ ounces of cooked beef, ½ ounce of cheese		MMA, 1½ oz eq MMA, ½ oz eq	(2 oz eq total)	
Whole-grain bun, 2 ounces		G, 2 oz eq		
Lettuce, ⅛ cup <sup>1</sup>		None		
Tomato, ¼ cup		V, ¼ cup	(¾ cup total)	
Carrot sticks, ½ cup		V, ½ cup		
Green apple, ½ cup		F, ½ cup		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Cheeseburger on bun (MMA, G) Carrot sticks (½ cup V) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) and ½ cup of V.
Carrot sticks (½ cup V) Apple (F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, M) and ½ cup of V.

Table 2-27, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Lettuce and tomato (¼ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Carrot sticks (½ cup V) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes, but the vegetable servings cannot credit as ½ cup of V for OVS because they already credit as the full serving of the vegetables component. <sup>3</sup>	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two full food components (V, M). It is missing at least one other component.
Cheeseburger on bun (MMA, G) Lettuce and tomato (¼ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Low-fat milk (M)	3	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Lettuce and tomato (¼ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Carrot sticks (½ cup V) Apple (F) Milk (M)	4	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, M).

<sup>1</sup> Raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served. A ¼-cup serving is required to provide minimum creditable amount of ⅛ cup.

<sup>2</sup> Selections of less than ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as a component for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings of fruits or vegetables to provide at least ½ cup. To encourage selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings.

<sup>3</sup> Selections of the full serving of fruits and vegetables credit as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal.



## Offering More than the Full Vegetables Component as Two Food Items with Different Servings

Table 2-28 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers more than the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the vegetables component as two separate food items with different serving sizes.

The NSLP meal pattern for grades 9-12 requires at least 1 cup of the vegetables component. This menu provides  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups of the vegetables component from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of tomato sauce in the meat sauce and 2 cups of salad (which credits as 1 cup). The salad credits as the full vegetables component or meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. However, the meat sauce alone cannot credit as the vegetables component because the tomato sauce is less than the full 1-cup component and less than the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup requirement for OVS.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select both the meat sauce and salad (more than the full vegetables component) or the salad alone (full vegetables component) must also select either:

- the full serving of at least two other components, one of which could be 1 cup of fruit; or
- at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit and the full serving of at least one other component.

Students who select only the meat sauce ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of vegetables) must also select at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of fruit and the full serving of at least two other components.

When menus offer the full serving of the vegetables component as two food items with different serving sizes, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is to offer all vegetable choices in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings, so that any student selection meets the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup requirement for OVS.



**Table 2-28. Offering more than the full vegetables component for grades 9-12 as two food items with different serving sizes**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
WGR pasta, 1 cup cooked		G, 2 oz eq		
Meat sauce, 2 ounces of cooked hamburger <sup>1</sup>		MMA, 2 oz eq		
Tomato sauce in meat sauce, ¼ cup		V, ¼ cup		
Tossed garden salad, 2 cups <sup>2</sup>		V, 1 cup (1¼ cups total)		
Fruit salad, two ½-cup servings		F, 1 cup		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
WGR pasta (G) Fruit salad, one serving (½ cup F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (G, M) and includes ½ cup of F.
Salad (V) Fruit salad, one serving (½ cup F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (V, M) and includes ½ cup of F.
WGR pasta (G) Salad (V) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (G, V, M).
WGR pasta (G) Meat sauce (MMA, ¼ cup V) <sup>3</sup> Milk (M)	3	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (G, MMA, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.

Table 2-28, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
WGR pasta (G) Meat sauce (MMA, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup V) <sup>3</sup> Fruit salad, one serving ( $\frac{1}{2}$ cup F)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (G, MMA) and includes $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of F and V combined.
Salad (V) Fruit salad, one serving ( $\frac{1}{2}$ cup F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (V, M) and includes $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS for commercial products or a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” in section 1).

<sup>2</sup> Raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served. A  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving is required to provide minimum creditable amount of  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup.

<sup>3</sup> Selections of less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit for OVS, unless they are combined with additional servings of fruits or vegetables to provide at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. To encourage selections of reimbursable meals, offer all fruits and vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings.



## Selection of Fruits, Vegetables, and One Other Component

With OVS at lunch, students must select at least three of the five food components offered, including at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components. A student's selection of only fruits, vegetables, and one other component could be a reimbursable meal depending on the serving size of the selected food items for each grade group.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

The NSLP meal pattern for grades K-5 and 6-8 requires  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of the vegetables component. If a student selects only fruits, vegetables, and one other component, either the fruit selection or the vegetable selection must be the full serving in order for both to credit as components for OVS. For example, an elementary student who selects  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit (full component),  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetable (less than full component but meets OVS requirement) and one other full component has a reimbursable meal.

Table 2-29 shows OVS examples when students in grades K-5 and 6-8 select only fruits, vegetables, and one other component.

- **Vegetables component:** The planned lunch menu offers 1 cup of vegetables from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of broccoli and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn. This provides  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup more vegetables than the required  $\frac{3}{4}$  serving for grades K-5 and 6-8. A student's selection of  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of broccoli or corn does not credit as the full vegetables component. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. **Note:** SFAs may serve larger amounts of any component if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.
- **Fruits component:** The planned lunch menu offers the required  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of red grapes. The  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving provides the full fruits component for grades K-5 and 6-8, and meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn or broccoli (less than full component but meets OVS requirement) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of grapes (full component) must also select the full serving of at least one other component. Students who select  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of broccoli and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn (more than the full vegetables component) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of grapes (full fruits component) must also select the full serving of at least one other component.

**Table 2-29. Selecting only fruits, vegetables, and one other component for grades K-5 and 6-8**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Grilled chicken, 1½ ounces cooked		MMA, 1½ oz eq		
Whole-grain roll, 2 ounces		G, 2 oz eq		
Broccoli, ½ cup Corn, ½ cup		V, ½ cup V, ½ cup (1 cup total)		
Red grapes, ½ cup		F, ½ cup		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Broccoli (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes (F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, M) and ½ cup of V.
Broccoli (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes (F) Chicken (MMA)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, MMA) and ½ cup of V.
Broccoli (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes (F) Roll (G)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, G) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes (F) Roll (G)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, G) and ½ cup of V.

Table 2-29, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Corn (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes (F) Milk (M)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, M) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes (F) Chicken (MMA)	3	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, MMA) and ½ cup of V.

<sup>1</sup> Selections of ½ cup of vegetables do not credit as the full ¾-cup component for grades K-5 and 6-8 but meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.



**Grades 9-12**

The NSLP meal pattern for grades 9-12 requires 1 cup of fruits and 1 cup of vegetables. If a student selects only fruits, vegetables, and one other component, either the fruit selection or the vegetable selection must be the full 1-cup serving in order for both to credit as components for OVS. For example, a high school student who selects 1 cup of fruit (full component),  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetable (less than full component but meets OVS requirement), and one other full component has a reimbursable meal.

Table 2-30 shows OVS examples when students in grades 9-12 select only fruits, vegetables, and one other component.

- **Vegetables component:** The planned lunch menu offers the required 1 cup of vegetables from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of broccoli and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn. A  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of broccoli or corn does not credit as the full vegetables component. However, each  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.
- **Fruits component:** The planned lunch menu offers the required 1 cup of fruit from two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings of red grapes. A  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of red grapes does not credit as the full fruits component but meets the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables.

For a reimbursable meal, students who select  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn or broccoli (less than the full vegetables component but meets OVS requirement) and 1 cup of red grapes (full fruits component) must also select the full serving of at least one other full component. Students who select  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of broccoli and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of corn (full vegetables component) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of red grapes (less than full fruits component but meets OVS requirement) must also select the full serving of at least one other full component.





**Table 2-30. Selecting only fruits, vegetables, and one other component for grades 9-12**

Planned lunch menu		Meal pattern components		
Grilled chicken, 2 ounces cooked		MMA, 2 oz eq		
Whole-grain roll, 2 ounces		G, 2 oz eq		
Broccoli, ½ cup Corn, ½ cup		V, ½ cup V, ½ cup	(1 cup total)	
Red grapes, two ½-cup servings		F, 1 cup		
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Broccoli (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes, 1 serving (½ cup F) <sup>1</sup> Milk (M)	3	1	Yes	<b>No.</b> While the selected meal includes 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (M).
Broccoli (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes, 1 serving (½ cup F) <sup>1</sup> Chicken (MMA)	3	1	Yes	<b>No.</b> While the selected meal includes 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (MMA).
Broccoli (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes, 1 serving (½ cup F) <sup>1</sup> Roll (G)	3	1	Yes	<b>No.</b> While the selected meal includes 1 cup of F and V combined, it contains only one full component (G).

Table 2-30, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Corn (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes, 2 servings (F) Roll (G)	4	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, G) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes, 2 servings (F) Milk (M)	4	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal includes two full components (F, M) and ½ cup of V.
Corn (½ cup V) <sup>1</sup> Grapes, 2 servings (F) Chicken (MMA)	4	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (F, MMA) and ½ cup of V.
<sup>1</sup> Selections of ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as the full component for grades 9-12 but meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.				



## Grains Component with OVS at Lunch

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the grains component at lunch. For more information on the NSLP meal pattern requirements for grains, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and visit the “[Grains Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### WGR Requirement

All grains offered at lunch and breakfast must be WGR. For comprehensive guidance on the WGR requirements, refer to the CSDE's guide, *Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*.

### Waiver for WGR requirement during COVID-19

During the current COVID public health emergency, the USDA is allowing several flexibilities for the NSLP and SBP meal patterns, including a waiver of the requirement that all grains must be WGR. SFAs that cannot meet the WGR requirement may request a waiver from the CSDE. If approved by the CSDE, this waiver is in effect through June 30, 2022. For more information, refer to “[Meal Pattern Flexibilities during COVID-19](#)” in section 1.



## Serving Size for Grains

Table 2-31 summarizes the NSLP meal pattern servings for the grains component. The daily amount is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each lunch, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as the full grains component for OVS.

Table 2-31. Meal pattern servings for the grains component at lunch <sup>1</sup>			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>2,3</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	1 oz eq	8 oz eq	11 oz eq
6-8	1 oz eq	8 oz eq	11 oz eq
9-12	2 oz eq	10 oz eq	14 oz eq
<sup>1</sup> All grains must be WGR. SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE's resources, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> and <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> ). <sup>2</sup> SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch. For grades 9-12, the minimum weekly requirement is the sum of the minimum daily requirement. <sup>3</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.			

SFAs may offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the grains component as one or more individual food items, such as a whole-grain bread stick, WGR roll, whole-corn tortilla, and brown rice. Grains may also be part of combination foods, such as an entree that contains the grains and MMA components. Examples include hamburger on a WGR bun, turkey sandwich on a whole-wheat roll, lasagna made with WGR noodles, and pizza made with WGR crust.

A grain food item must contain at least ¼ oz eq to credit toward part of the grains component. The combined total of all grain food items must provide at least 1 oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8, and at least 2 oz eq for grades 9-12. If a food item contains less than the full serving, the menu must include additional grains to meet the full serving for each grade group.

Grains offered in amounts less than ¼ oz eq are not included in the calculation of daily and weekly grain offerings but count toward the USDA's dietary specifications. To credit as the grains component for OVS, the amount selected by the student must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for the grade group.

## Methods to Determine Grain Ounce Equivalents

The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain servings of a creditable product or recipe. These methods are summarized below. For detailed guidance on both methods, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).

SFAs are not required to use either method if the grain is part of a product that has a CN label, such as pizza and breaded chicken nuggets. CN-labeled products credit based on the stated crediting information for grain oz eq. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#).

### Method 1: Weight or volume (USDA's Exhibit A chart)

Method 1 uses the USDA's chart, [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (Exhibit A) to determine the required weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) for the grain group where the product belongs. The required amounts for the grains component are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs. The CSDE's resource, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#), lists the Exhibit A grain oz eq that apply to the meal patterns for grades K-12.

The amount of a creditable grain food that provides 1 oz eq varies because different types of foods contain different amounts of creditable grains. For example, to credit as 1 oz eq of the grains component, a roll must weigh 28 grams (1 ounce), a corn muffin must weigh 34 grams (1.2 ounces), and a blueberry muffin must weigh 55 grams (2 ounces). The minimum amount that credits toward the grains component is  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz eq.

Method 1 is used for all commercial grain products. This method may also be used for recipes if the SFA knows the weight (grams or ounces) of the prepared (cooked) serving.

Menu planners can use the USDA's online [Exhibit A Grains Tool](#) to determine a product's grain servings, and the required amount to obtain a specific meal pattern contribution. For more information, refer to the USDA's webinars, [Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue](#) and [How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool](#).



## Method 2: Creditable grains

Method 2 determines the oz eq for creditable grain products and recipes by calculating the total weight (grams) of creditable grains per serving. The grams of creditable grains are obtained from the commercial product's PFS or calculated from the grain quantities in the SFA's recipe. To credit as 1 oz eq of the grains component, foods in groups A-E of the USDA's Exhibit A chart must contain **16 grams** of creditable grains (including at least 8 grams of whole grains) and foods in groups H-I must contain **28 grams** of creditable grains (including at least 14 grams of whole grains).

For commercial products, method 2 requires a PFS from the manufacturer that documents the weight of the creditable grains per serving. This information cannot be determined from the product's Nutrition Facts label or packaging.

For foods made from scratch, method 2 requires a standardized recipe that lists the weight of each creditable grain ingredient. If the recipe lists grain ingredients only by volume (e.g., cups and quarts), the SFA must calculate the equivalent weight (grams) for each grain ingredient.

## When method 2 is required for commercial products

SFAs may need to obtain additional information to determine the crediting information for some commercial grain products. A PFS is required for commercial products when any of the following situations apply:

- a whole grain is not the first ingredient but the product contains more than one whole grain;
- the first ingredient is a flour blend of whole and enriched grains;
- a combination food that contains a grain portion is not CN labeled;
- the manufacturer claims that the product's serving size is less than the required weight or volume in the USDA's Exhibit A chart; or
- the product is not listed in the USDA's Exhibit A chart.

For additional guidance on each situation, refer to the CSDE's resource, [\*Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP\*](#). For information on crediting foods with flour blends, refer to the CSDE's guide, [\*Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12\*](#).

If the manufacturer will not supply a PFS, or the PFS does not provide the appropriate documentation, the product cannot credit as the grains component in school meals.



## Offering the Full Grains Component as Two Food Items

When the lunch menu offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the grains component as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as the grains component for OVS. Selections of less than the full serving cannot credit.

Whether a student's selection credits as the grains component for OVS depends on the amount the student selects and the required oz eq for each grade group. The required oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8 are different from the required oz eq for grades 9-12.

When the menu offers the full serving of the grains component as two separate food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as the full component for reimbursable meals. A better menu planning approach is to offer all grains in at least the minimum daily serving, or package both grain items together, so that any student selection credits as the full grains component for OVS.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-32 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 offers the full 1-oz eq serving of the grains component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 1 oz eq of grains from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of brown rice ( $\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq) and a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce whole-grain roll ( $\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq). Students must take both food items to credit as the grains component for OVS. The brown rice or roll alone cannot credit as the grains component because each serving is less than 1 oz eq.



**Table 2-32. Offering 1 oz eq of the grains component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two ½-oz eq food items**

**Required daily serving: 1 oz eq**

**Planned grains component**

Brown rice, ¼ cup

Whole-grain roll, ½ ounce

**Meal pattern contribution**

½ oz eq

½ oz eq

(1 oz eq total)

Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full grains component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Brown rice Whole-grain roll	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Brown rice	½	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.
Whole-grain roll	½	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.

## Grades 9-12

Table 2-33 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers the full 2-oz eq serving of the grains component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 2 oz eq of grains from ½ cup of brown rice (1 oz eq) and a 1-ounce whole-grain roll (1 oz eq). Students must take both food items to credit as the grains component for OVS. The brown rice or roll alone cannot credit as the grains component because each serving is less than 2 oz eq.

Table 2-33. Offering 2 oz eq of the grains component for grades 9-12 as two 1-oz eq food items				
Required daily serving: 2 oz eq				
Planned grains component			Meal pattern contribution	
Brown rice, ½ cup			1 oz eq	
Whole-grain roll, 1 ounce			1 oz eq	(2 oz eq total)
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full grains component? <i>Must be at least 2 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
Brown rice Whole-grain roll	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq for the grains component	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
Brown rice	1	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 2 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.
Whole-grain roll	1	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 2 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.

## Offering Two Food Items that are each the Full Grain Serving

When the lunch menu offers the grains component as two separate food items that each provide the full serving (minimum daily amount), students may select either food item to credit as the full grains component for OVS. Selections of more than the full serving (such as a 2-oz eq WGR roll for grades K-5 and 6-8, or a 3-oz eq WGR roll for grades 9-12) credit as only one component for OVS at lunch.

SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch. For grades 9-12, the minimum weekly requirement is the sum of the minimum daily requirement. For more information on the NSLP meal patterns, refer to [table 2-31](#) in this section, and sections 1 and 4 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

SFAs may serve larger amounts of any component if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-34 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 offers more than the full 1-oz eq serving of the grains component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 2 oz eq of grains from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of WGR spaghetti (1 oz eq) and a 1-ounce WGR roll (1 oz eq). Students may take the spaghetti and roll together, or either one alone, to credit as the grains component for OVS.



**Table 2-34. Offering more than the full grains component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two 1-oz eq food items**

**Required daily serving: 1 oz eq <sup>1</sup>**

<b>Planned grains component</b>		<b>Meal pattern contribution</b>		
WGR spaghetti, ½ cup		1 oz eq		
Whole-grain roll, 1 ounce		1 oz eq (2 oz eq total)		
<b>Student selects</b>	<b>Oz eq</b>	<b>OVS contribution (full component)</b>	<b>Credits as full grains component?</b> <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	<b>Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal</b>
WGR spaghetti WGR roll	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR spaghetti	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR roll	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch (refer <a href="#">table 2-31</a> ).				

**Grades 9-12**

Table 2-35 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers more than the full 2 oz eq serving of the grains component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. This menu provides 4 oz eq of grains from 1 cup of WGR spaghetti (2 oz eq) and a 2-ounce WGR roll (2 oz eq). Students may take the spaghetti and roll together, or either one alone, to credit as the grains component for OVS.

Table 2-35. Offering more than the full grains component for grades 9-12 as two 2-oz eq food items				
Required daily serving: 2 oz eq <sup>1</sup>				
Planned grains component		Meal pattern contribution		
Whole-wheat spaghetti, 1 cup		2 oz eq		
Whole-grain roll, 2 ounce		2 oz eq (4 oz eq total)		
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full grains component? <i>Must be at least 2 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
WGR spaghetti WGR roll	4	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 2 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR spaghetti	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR roll	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
<sup>1</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.				

## Offering More than the Full Grains Component as Two Food Items with Different Oz Eq

Students must select the full serving (minimum daily amount) to credit as the grains component for OVS. Selections of less than the full serving cannot credit as a food component for OVS. Selections of more than the full serving credit as only one component for OVS. Whether a student's choice credits as the grains component for OVS depends on the planned menu and the required oz eq for each grade group.

When menus offer the full serving of the grains component as two separate food items with different oz eq, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as a component for reimbursable meals. SFAs must consider how the menu offerings affect reimbursable meals under OVS. A better menu planning approach is to offer all grains in at least the minimum daily serving, or package both items together, so that any student selection credits as the grains component for OVS.

### Grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-36 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 offers more than the full 1-oz eq serving of the grains component from two separate food items with different oz eq. This menu provides 1½ oz eq of grains from ½ cup of WGR ziti (1 oz eq) and ½ ounce of WGR garlic bread (½ oz eq). Students may take the ziti and garlic bread together, or the ziti alone, to credit as the grains component for OVS. The garlic bread alone cannot credit as the grains component because the serving is less than 1 oz eq.





**Table 2-36. Offering more than the full grains component for grades K-5 and 6-8 as two food items with different oz eq <sup>1</sup>**

**Required daily serving: 1 oz eq <sup>1</sup>**

**Planned grains component**

WGR ziti, ½ cup

WGR garlic bread, ½ ounce

**Meal pattern contribution**

1 oz eq

½ oz eq (1½ oz eq total)

Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full grains component? <i>Must be at least 1 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
WGR ziti  WGR garlic bread	1½	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 1 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR ziti	1	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 1 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR garlic bread	½	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 1 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8 at lunch (refer [table 2-31](#)).

### Grades 9-12

Table 2-37 shows OVS examples when a lunch menu for grades 9-12 offers more than the full 2-oz eq serving of the grains component as two separate food items with different oz eq. This menu provides 3 oz eq of grains from 1 cup of WGR ziti (2 oz eq) and 1 ounce of WGR garlic bread (1 oz eq). Students may take the ziti and garlic bread together, or the ziti alone, to credit as the grains component for OVS. The garlic bread alone cannot credit as the grains component because the serving is less than 2 oz eq.

Table 2-37. Offering more than the full grains component for grades 9-12 as two food items with different oz eq				
Required daily serving: 2 oz eq <sup>1</sup>				
Planned grains component		Meal pattern contribution		
WGR ziti, 1 cup		2 oz eq	(3 oz eq total)	
WGR garlic bread, 1 ounce		1 oz eq		
Student selects	Oz eq	OVS contribution (full component)	Credits as full grains component? <i>Must be at least 2 oz eq</i>	Additional foods needed for reimbursable meal
WGR ziti WGR garlic bread	3	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is <b>more</b> than the required 2 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of more than the required serving credit as only one component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR ziti	2	1	<b>Yes.</b> The student's selection is the <b>same</b> as the required 2 oz eq for the grains component.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other component.
WGR garlic bread	1	0	<b>No.</b> The student's selection is <b>less</b> than the required 2 oz eq for the grains component. Selections of less than the required serving cannot credit as a component for OVS.	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.
<sup>1</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications				

## Menu Planning Tips for OVS at Lunch

SFAs decide how to offer the food components for OVS at lunch. These menu-planning decisions determine the choices that students may select for reimbursable meals. SFAs can increase the likelihood that students will select reimbursable meals by using strategies that encourage students to take at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving (minimum daily amount) of at least two other components. The following guidelines help simplify the menu planning process and make it easier for students to select (and school food service staff to identify) reimbursable lunches with OVS.

- **Offer combination entrees:** Offer combination entrees (such as pizza, lasagna, and hamburger on a bun) that provide the full serving of both the grains and MMA components. Students who choose the entree have already selected two full components, and only need to select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables for a reimbursable meal.
- **Offer components as one food item:** Offer the full serving of the grains and MMA components as one food item instead of two, so any selection credits as a full component for OVS. For example, offer one 2-oz eq WGR muffin instead of two 1-oz eq WGR mini-muffins. For more information, refer to [“Offering Two Food Items that are each the Full Grain Serving”](#) and [“Offering Two Food Items that are each the Full MMA Serving”](#) in this section.
- **Package foods together:** When a food item is less than the full serving of the grains or MMA components, package it together with another food items so students must take both. For example, wrap a 1-oz eq yogurt ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) and a 1-oz eq cheese stick together to provide 2 oz eq for grades 9-12, or wrap two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz eq packages of crackers together to provide 1 oz eq for grades K-5 and 6-8.
- **Offer all vegetable choices in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings:** Offer all grades a variety of vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings and allow students to select up to two servings. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. **Note:** This menu planning approach provides an additional  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of daily vegetables for grades K-5 and 6-8. SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).
- **Offer all fruits in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings:** Offer all grades a variety of fruits in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings. Allow students in grades K-5 and 6-8 to select at least one serving. Allow students in grades 9-12 to select at least two servings. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables

- **Plan fruit and vegetable choices to meet weekly juice limit:** Review lunch menus for compliance with the weekly juice limit. Provide clear information on lunch menus and cafeteria signage that instructs students on the amount of juice they can select with each lunch. For more information, refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Lunch](#)” in this section and “[Assorted Juice Choice at Breakfast](#)” in section 3. **Note:** For best nutrition, serve more fruit than juice. Juice is more calorie dense than whole fruits and vegetables and does not provide the same nutritional benefits.
- **Provide clear signage:** Check that lunch menus and cafeteria signage clearly communicate all menu choices and what students must select for a reimbursable lunch, and that signage is located on the serving line near the food component to which it applies. A helpful strategy for determining if signage is clear and effective is to conduct a cafeteria walk-through from the beginning of the serving line to the POS. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1.
- **Provide staff training:** Provide regular OVS training to help school food service staff understand and identify the required NSLP meal pattern components, how food items credit for each meal choice on the lunch menu, and what constitutes a reimbursable meal at the POS. For more information, refer to “[Food service staff training](#)” in section 1.

For more information on menu planning for lunch, refer to the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and the CSDE’s resource, [Menu Planning for the National School Lunch Program](#).



## Sample Lunch Menus

The menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate what students may select from each component for a reimbursable lunch, based on the planned daily lunch menu for each grade group. Signage must be located at the beginning of the serving line and near each food component to indicate what and how much students can take for a reimbursable meal. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1.

This section contains four sample daily lunch menus that show how SFAs could communicate the OVS requirements to students. To demonstrate how menu planning choices affect OVS, each sample menu:

- offers the same food items but changes the amounts that students may select from each component;
- provides at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) of each component;
- includes choices within each component; and
- offers all entrees as combination foods that provide at least the full serving of the grains component and at least the full serving of the MMA component.

**Note:** These sample lunch menus meet the daily meal pattern requirements for the purpose of illustrating the OVS requirements. However, the NSLP meal pattern also requires weekly minimums for the grains component and MMA component. To meet these requirements for grades K-5 and 6-8, weekly lunch menus must include additional servings of grains and MMA on some days over the week.



### Sample lunch menu 1 for grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-38 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that allows students to select one choice from each component. All menu items offer each component in at least the full serving for both grade groups.

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all choices but must select at least one serving of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Each ½-cup fruit choice credits as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal. Each ¾-cup vegetable choice credits the full vegetables component or meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

**Table 2-38. Sample lunch menu 1 for grades K-5 and 6-8**

<p>Each lunch includes five components: milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates. Choose <b>at least one</b> fruit or vegetable and two other components. For best nutrition, take all choices!</p>			
<b>Milk</b>  <b>Choose one</b>	<b>Choose at least one serving</b>		<b>MMA and grains</b>  <b>Choose one</b>
	<b>Fruits</b>  <b>Choose one</b>	<b>Vegetables</b>  <b>Choose one</b>	
	Raisins Blueberries Green grapes Pineapple chunks Sliced peaches Banana	Carrot sticks Broccoli florets Garden salad Seasoned corn Roasted potatoes Green beans	
Low-fat milk Fat-free milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk			Hamburger on whole-wheat bun Turkey whole-grain wrap Baked chicken with WGR corn bread Southwest chili with whole-grain roll

Table 2-39 shows OVS examples with selections for sample lunch menu 1.

Table 2-39. OVS examples for sample lunch menu 1

Planned lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8				Meal pattern components
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk			M, 1 cup
<b>Fruits</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Raisins, ¼ cup <sup>1</sup> Blueberries, ½ cup Green grapes, ½ cup	Pineapple chunks, ½ cup Sliced peaches, ½ cup Banana, ½ cup		F, ½ cup
<b>Vegetables</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Carrot sticks, ¾ cup Broccoli florets, ¾ cup Garden salad, 1½ cups <sup>1</sup>	Seasoned corn, ¾ cup Roasted potatoes, ¾ cup Green beans, ¾ cup		V, ¾ cup
<b>MMA and grains</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Hamburger (2 ounces cooked) on whole-wheat bun (2 ounces) Turkey (2 ounces) in whole-grain wrap (2 ounces) Baked chicken (2 ounces cooked) with WGR corn bread (2.4 ounces) Southwest chili (½ cup beans) with whole-grain roll (2 ounces)			G, 2 oz eq MMA, 2 oz eq
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Hamburger on whole-wheat bun (MMA, G) Pineapple chunks (F)	2	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, F).
Carrot sticks (V) Banana (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (V, F, M).



Table 2-39, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Hamburger on whole-wheat bun (MMA, G) Milk (M)	2	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Baked chicken (MMA) Corn bread (G) Roasted potatoes (V)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, V).
Baked chicken (MMA) Green grapes (F) Broccoli florets (V)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, F, V).
Baked chicken (MMA) Raisins (F) Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, F, M).
Southwest chili (MMA) Whole-grain roll (G) Milk (M)	3	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Turkey wrap (MMA and G) Garden salad (V) Milk (M)	3	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four full components (MMA, G, V, M).

<sup>1</sup> Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served and raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served.

### Sample lunch menu 2 for grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-40 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that allows students to select one choice from the milk, fruits, grains, and MMA components, and two choices from the vegetables component. The menu offers all vegetables in ½-cup servings to make it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for fruits and vegetables. Each ½-cup vegetable choice does not provide the full vegetables component but meets the OVS requirement.

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all choices but must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Students may select two different vegetables or two servings of the same vegetable because the planned menu allows any two choices from the vegetables component. Selections of two ½-cup vegetable servings credit as only one component for OVS at lunch. For more information, refer to “[Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)” in the “Fruits and Vegetables” section.

**Table 2-40. Sample lunch menu 2 for grades K-5 and 6-8**

Each lunch includes five components: milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates. Choose **at least one** fruit or vegetable and two other components. For best nutrition, take all choices!

Choose at least one serving (½ cup)			
Milk	Fruits	Vegetables	MMA and grains
Choose one	Choose one	Choose up to two	Choose one
Low-fat milk	Raisins	Carrot sticks	Hamburger on whole-wheat bun
Fat-free milk	Blueberries	Broccoli florets	Turkey whole-grain wrap
Fat-free chocolate milk	Green grapes	Garden salad	Baked chicken with WGR corn bread
Fat-free strawberry milk	Pineapple chunks	Seasoned corn	Southwest chili with whole-grain roll
	Sliced peaches	Roasted potatoes	
	Banana	Green beans	

### Sample lunch menu 3 for grades K-5 and 6-8

Table 2-41 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily lunch menu for grades K-5 and 6-8 that allows students to select one choice from the milk, grains and MMA components; two choices from the fruits component; and two choices from the vegetables component. The menu offers all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings to make it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement. Each ½-cup fruit choice credits as either the full component or the minimum ½-cup requirement for OVS, but not both in the same meal. Each ½-cup vegetable choice does not credit as the full vegetables component but meets the OVS requirement.

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all choices but must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Students may select two different fruits, or two servings of the same fruit, because the planned menu allows any two choices from the fruits component. Students may select two different vegetables, or two servings of the same vegetable, because the planned menu allows any two choices from the vegetable component. Selections of two ½-cup fruit servings or two ½-cup vegetable servings credit as only one component for OVS at lunch. For more information, refer to “[Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)” in the “Fruits and Vegetables” section.

**Table 2-41. Sample lunch menu 3 for grades K-5 and 6-8**

Each lunch includes five components: milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates. Choose <b>at least one</b> fruit or vegetable and two other components. For best nutrition, take all choices!			
Milk	Choose at least one serving (½ cup)		
	Fruits	Vegetables	MMA and grains
	Choose up to two	Choose up to two	Choose one
Low-fat milk	Raisins	Carrot sticks	Hamburger on whole-wheat bun
Fat-free milk	Blueberries	Broccoli florets	Turkey whole-grain wrap
Fat-free chocolate milk	Green grapes	Garden salad	Baked chicken with WGR corn bread
Fat-free strawberry milk	Pineapple chunks	Seasoned corn	Southwest chili with whole-grain roll
	Sliced peaches	Roasted potatoes	
	Banana	Green beans	

### Sample lunch menu 4 for grades 9-12

Table 2-42 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily lunch menu for grades 9-12 that allows students to select one choice from the milk, grains and MMA components, two choices from the fruits component, and two choices from the vegetables component. The menu offers all fruits and vegetables in ½-cup servings to make it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement to select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. Each ½-cup fruit choice does not credit as the full fruits component but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. Each ½-cup vegetable choice does not credit as the full vegetables component but meets the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all choices but must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and two other components. Students may select two different fruits, or two servings of the same fruit, because the planned menu allows any two choices from the fruits component. Students may select two different vegetables, or two servings of the same vegetable, because the planned menu allows any two choices from the vegetable component. Selections of two ½-cup fruit servings or two ½-cup vegetable servings credit as only one component for OVS at lunch. For more information, refer to “[Selections of Multiple Fruits or Vegetables](#)” in the “Fruits and Vegetables” section.

**Table 2-42. Sample lunch menu 4 for grades 9-12**

Each lunch includes five components: milk, fruits, vegetables, grains and meat/meat alternates. Choose <b>at least one</b> fruit or vegetable and two other components. For best nutrition, take all choices!			
Milk	Choose at least one serving (½ cup)		MMA and grains
	Fruits	Vegetables	
	Choose up to two	Choose up to two	
Choose one			Choose one
Low-fat milk	Raisins	Carrot sticks	Hamburger on whole-wheat bun
Fat-free milk	Blueberries	Broccoli florets	Turkey whole-grain wrap
Fat-free chocolate milk	Green grapes	Garden salad	Baked chicken with WGR corn bread
Fat-free strawberry milk	Pineapple chunks	Seasoned corn	Southwest chili with whole-grain roll
	Sliced peaches	Roasted potatoes	
	Banana	Green beans	

Table 2-43 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample lunch menu 4.

Table 2-43. OVS examples for sample lunch menu 4				
Planned lunch menu for grades 9-12				Meal pattern components
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk			M, 1 cup
<b>Fruits</b> <i>Choose one or two</i>	Raisins, ¼ cup <sup>1</sup> Blueberries, ½ cup Green grapes, ½ cup	Pineapple chunks, ½ cup Sliced peaches, ½ cup Banana, ½ cup	F, 1 cup	
<b>Vegetables</b> <i>Choose one or two</i>	Carrot sticks, ½ cup Broccoli florets, ½ cup Garden salad, 1 cup <sup>1</sup>	Seasoned corn, ½ cup Roasted potatoes, ½ cup Green beans, ½ cup	V, 1 cup	
<b>MMA and grains</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Hamburger (2 ounces cooked) on whole-wheat bun (2 ounces) Turkey (2 ounces) in whole-grain wrap (2 ounces) Baked chicken (2 ounces cooked) with WGR corn bread (2.4 ounces) Southwest chili (½ cup beans) with whole-grain roll (2 ounces)			G, 2 oz eq MMA, 2 oz eq
Students must select at least three of the five food components, including at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other components.				
Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Baked chicken (MMA) Peaches (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Garden salad (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup>	3	1	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains one full component (MMA) and at least ½ cup of F or V (1 cup combined) but is missing another full component.

Table 2-43, *continued*

Student selects	Food items	Full food components <i>Must be at least 2</i>	At least ½ cup of F or V <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Southwest chili (MMA) Carrot sticks (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Carrot sticks (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Milk (1 M)	4	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, V, M).
Turkey wrap (MMA and G) Garden salad (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Milk (M)	3	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) and includes ½ cup of V.
Southwest chili (MMA) Whole-grain roll (G) Milk (1 M)	3	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three full components (MMA, G, M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F or V.
Green beans (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Seasoned corn (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup> Blueberries (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Milk (1 M)	4	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (V, M) and includes ½ cup of F.
Baked chicken (MMA) Corn bread (G) Green grapes (½ cup F) <sup>2</sup> Roasted potatoes (½ cup V) <sup>2</sup>	4	2	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains two full components (MMA, G) and includes 1 cup of F and V combined.
<sup>1</sup> Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served and raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served. <sup>2</sup> Selections of ½ cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as the full component but meet the OVS requirement for at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.				

## 3 — OVS at Breakfast

At breakfast, OVS is optional for all grades. When implemented, OVS applies only to the **daily** SBP meal pattern requirements.

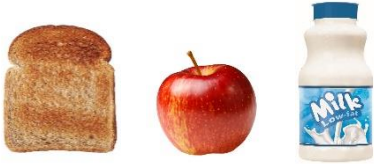
The OVS requirements for breakfast are different from the OVS requirements for lunch. OVS at breakfast requires a minimum number of food items instead of food components. The definitions below apply only to OVS at breakfast.

- A **food component** is one of the three food groups that comprise reimbursable breakfasts, including grains (with optional MMA substitutions), fruits (with optional vegetable substitutions), and milk.
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the three food components. It may contain one or more food components, or more than one serving of the same component. For example, a 2-ounce whole-grain bagel is one food component (grains) that contains two food items (two grains). For more information, refer to “[Food Items at Breakfast](#)” in this section.

Without OVS, breakfast menus must offer at least three food items from the three food components, and students must select all items. To implement the OVS option at breakfast, breakfast menus must offer at least four food items from the three food components. For a reimbursable meal, students must select at least three items, including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and the full serving of least two other food items. These requirements apply regardless of the number of food items offered. For example, if a breakfast menu offers more than four items, students must still select at least the required three items. Table 3-1 summarizes the SBP meal pattern requirements with and without OVS.





Table 3-1. SBP daily meal pattern requirements		
Requirements	Without OVS (minimum of three food items)	With OVS (minimum of four food items)
<b>SFA must offer</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Milk</li> <li>2. Fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions)</li> <li>3. Grains</li> </ol> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Milk</li> <li>2. Fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions)</li> <li>3. Grains</li> <li>4. Additional food item from either fruits (including optional vegetable substitutions) or grains (including MMA substitutions)</li> </ol>
<b>Student must select</b>	All food items.	At least three food items, including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and the full serving of at least two other food items.

## Overview of OVS Requirements for Breakfast

For a breakfast to be reimbursable under OVS, SFAs must meet the criteria below.

- Menu planning:** Breakfast menus must include at least four food items from the three food components (milk, fruits, and grains). The planned serving for each food item must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group in the SBP meal pattern. The four food items may include two servings of grains (either two of the same grain or two different grains) or two servings of fruit (either two of the same fruit or two different fruits) but cannot include two servings of milk. Table 3-2 shows examples of acceptable menu planning for breakfast.
- MMA substitutions:** SFAs may choose to substitute MMA in place of grains after offering 1 oz eq of grains. For example, a breakfast menu that includes 1 oz eq of whole-grain toast (grains component) may also include 1 oz eq of low-fat cheese (MMA component) offered as a substitution for the grains component. MMA substitutions credit toward the minimum weekly grains requirement. For more information, refer to “[MMA Substitutions](#)” in this section.

- **Vegetable substitutions:** SFAs may substitute vegetables for the fruits component at any breakfast, without including vegetables from other subgroups in the weekly menu. This flexibility is in effect for school year 2021-22. For more information, refer to “[Vegetable Substitutions](#)” in this section.
- **Duplicate servings:** SFAs may offer duplicate servings of the fruits component (including vegetable substitutions) and the grains component (including MMA substitutions). For example, SFAs may allow students to select two servings of the same 1 oz eq grain item (such as two servings of toast) or the same two ½-cup serving of the fruits component (such as two ½-cup serving of fruit salad). SFAs must clearly communicate this information on the breakfast menu and cafeteria signage, and must train food service staff on how to recognize reimbursable meals with duplicate servings. For more information, refer to “[Duplicate Fruit Selections at Breakfast](#)” and “[Duplicate Grain Selections at Breakfast](#)” in this section.
- **Larger amounts:** SFAs may serve larger amounts of any component if the weekly breakfast menu does not exceed the USDA’s dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*. **Note:** SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the SBP meal pattern’s minimum weekly requirements for each grade group. For more information, refer to section 4 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.
- **Unit pricing:** Meals must be priced as a unit, i.e., students pay the same price regardless of whether they take three or more food items. SFAs must establish one price for a complete reimbursable breakfast in the paid meal category and one price for a complete reimbursable breakfast in the reduced-price meal category. SFAs may set different unit prices (tiered pricing) for various combinations of foods offered as a reimbursable breakfast. However, all students, including those eligible for free and reduced-price meals, must be allowed to select any reimbursable breakfast. Breakfasts with a higher unit price must be available at no cost for all free-eligible students, and at no more than 30 cents for all reduced-eligible students.
- **Identifying reimbursable meals:** SFAs should plan breakfast menus to make it easy for students to select (and food service staff to identify) reimbursable meals. SFAs must post signage that clearly communicates the food items for each menu choice, and indicates what students must select for a reimbursable meal. SFAs should also provide training for school food service staff on the SBP meal pattern components, including how to recognize reimbursable meals under OVS. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” and “[Food service staff training](#)” in section 1.

- Required student selections:** Students must select at least three food items, including at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered) and the full serving of at least two other food items. Selections of less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables do not credit as a food item for OVS, unless the student also selects additional fruits or vegetables to provide at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. To encourage selections of reimbursable meals, SFAs should offer all fruits and vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings.
- Declining foods:** After selecting the required three food items (including at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables), students may decline any other food items. Students may take smaller portions of the declined food items. However, selections of less than the full serving cannot credit as a food item for OVS. For example, if the breakfast menu provides 1 oz eq of grains from two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz eq WGR mini blueberry muffins, students must take both muffins to credit as one food item for OVS. One muffin ( $\frac{1}{2}$  oz eq) does not credit because the serving is less than the full serving.

**Table 3-2. Examples of acceptable menu planning for breakfast**

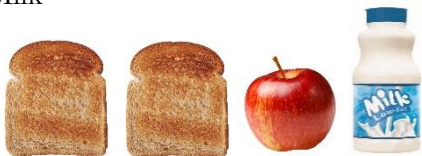

Plan a minimum of four food items <sup>1</sup>	
Menu A	Menu B
1. Grains 2. Grains (or MMA substitutions) 3. Fruits 4. Milk 	1. Grains 2. Fruits (or vegetable substitutions) 3. Fruits (or vegetable substitutions) 4. Milk 
<sup>1</sup> The four food items may include two servings of fruits or two servings of grains but cannot include two servings of milk. The four food items may include two servings of grains (either two of the same grain or two different grains) or two servings of fruit (either two of the same fruit or two different fruits) but cannot include two servings of milk.	

Table 3-3 summarizes the OVS requirements for all grade groups at breakfast.

Table 3-3. Summary of OVS requirements for breakfast

SFAs must offer at least four food items from three food components <sup>1</sup>	Student must select
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Milk (1 cup) <sup>2</sup></li> <li>2. Fruits or optional vegetable substitutions (1 cup) <sup>3,4</sup></li> <li>3. Grains, WGR (1 oz eq)</li> <li>4. Additional item from either fruits (including vegetable substitutions) or grains (including MMA substitutions) <sup>5,6</sup></li> </ol>	At least three food items, including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).
<p><sup>1</sup> Each food item must be at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) for each grade group in the SBP meal pattern.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> SFAs must offer a variety (at least two different choices) of unflavored low-fat milk, unflavored or fat-free milk, and flavored fat-free milk (refer to “<a href="#">Milk Variety</a>” in section 2). At least one milk choice must be unflavored.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Fruit and vegetable juice (including vegetable/fruit juice blends) must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice. Fruit juice together with vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the total fruits offered during the week. The juice limit includes juice that is fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate; frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice; pureed fruits or vegetables in fruit or vegetable smoothies; and juice from canned fruit served in 100 percent juice, unless the canned fruit is drained or served as an extra food. For more information, refer to “<a href="#">Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast</a>” in this section.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> SFAs may substitute vegetables for the fruits component if the substitutions meet the USDA’s requirements (refer to “<a href="#">Vegetable Substitutions</a>” in this section).</p> <p><sup>5</sup> The fourth planned food item cannot be another serving of milk.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> SFAs may substitute 1 oz eq of MMA for 1 oz eq of grains after offering 1 oz eq of grains (refer to “<a href="#">MMA Substitutions</a>” in this section). MMA substitutions credit toward the minimum weekly grains requirement.</p>	



Table 3-4 shows sample breakfast menus that meet the OVS menu planning requirements for all grade groups. Each menu contains at least four food items from the three components (milk, fruits, and grains).

Table 3-4. Sample acceptable breakfast menus for OVS			
Planned menu items	Meal pattern components	Number of food items	Total food items
Whole-grain corn muffin, 2½ ounces <sup>1</sup>	G, 2 oz eq	2 G	5
Orange juice, ½ cup <sup>2</sup>	F, ½ cup	1 F	
Strawberries, ½ cup <sup>2</sup>	F, ½ cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain granola cereal, ¼ cup <sup>1</sup>	G, 1 oz eq	1 G	4
Vanilla yogurt, ½ cup <sup>3</sup>	G (MMA substitution), 1 oz eq	1 G	
Fruit salad, 1 cup <sup>4</sup>	F, 1 cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain mini pancakes, 2½ ounces <sup>1</sup>	G, 2 oz eq	2 G	5
Choice of juice, ½ cup <sup>2</sup>	F, ½ cup	1 F	
Peaches, ½ cup <sup>2</sup>	F, ½ cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M	
Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce <sup>1</sup>	G, 1 oz eq	1 G	7
Cheese omelet, 1 egg and 1 ounce cheese <sup>3</sup>	G (MMA substitution), 3 oz eq	3 G	
Strawberries, 1 cup <sup>3</sup>	F, 1 cup	2 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M	

Table 3-4, *continued*

Planned menu items	Meal pattern components	Number of food items	Total food items
Whole-grain cereal flakes, 1 cup <sup>1</sup>	G, 1 oz eq	1 G	5
Whole-grain blueberry muffin, 2 ounces <sup>1</sup>	G, 1 oz eq	1 G	
Apple and orange wedges,1 cup <sup>4</sup>	F, 1 cup	2 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M	
Oatmeal, ½ cup <sup>1</sup>	G, 1 oz eq	1 G	4
Blueberries, ½ cup <sup>2</sup>	F, ½ cup	1 F	
Banana, one 150 count (½ cup) <sup>2</sup>	F, ½ cup	1 F	
Choice of milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M	

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)).

<sup>2</sup> SFAs may choose to credit each ½-cup serving of fruit as one food item.

<sup>3</sup> SFAs may choose to credit 1 oz eq of MMA as a 1 oz eq grain substitution or an extra food (refer to “[MMA Substitutions](#)” in this section).

<sup>4</sup> SFAs may choose to credit 1 cup of the same fruit as either one or two food items (refer to “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section).

## Food Items at Breakfast

Food items at breakfast credit differently from food items at lunch. A food item is a specific food offered within the three food components for breakfast. It may contain one or more food components, or more than one serving of the same component. Table 3-5 shows how some menu offerings credit as food items at breakfast.

Table 3-5. Examples of crediting menu offerings at breakfast

**Example 1: Whole-grain bagel**

A 2-ounce whole-grain bagel (2 oz eq) contains one food component (grains) that provides two food items (two grains) for OVS at breakfast. Alternatively, SFAs may choose to credit the bagel as one food item. For more information, refer to “[Crediting Grains as One or More Food Items](#)” in this section.

**Example 2: Variety of assorted fruit choices**

A variety of assorted ½-cup fruit choices (such as apples, oranges, blueberries, and red grapes) is one food component (fruits) that contains four food items (four fruits) for OVS at breakfast. SFAs may choose to credit two separate ½-cup servings of the same fruit as two food items for breakfast. For more information, refer to “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section.

**Example 3: School-made fruit and milk smoothie**

A smoothie made on site with ½ cup of pureed fruit and 1 cup of milk contains two food components (milk and fruit) that provide two food items for OVS. Amounts less than the required 1-cup serving of milk do not credit as a food item for OVS. Pureed fruit in smoothies credits only as juice and counts toward the weekly juice limit. For more information, refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast](#)” in this section, “[Milk Variety](#)” in section 2, and the CSDE’s resource, *Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP*.

**Example 4: School-made yogurt parfait**

A school-made yogurt parfait made with ½ cup (1 oz eq) of low-fat yogurt (MMA as a grain substitution), ½ cup of sliced fresh fruit, and ¼ cup (1 oz eq) of whole-grain granola contains two food components (grains and fruit) that provide three food items for OVS (two grains and one fruit).





## Offering Breakfast Components in More than One Food Item

SFAs may choose to offer the full serving of the fruits component (including vegetable substitutions) and the full serving of grains component (including MMA substitutions) as more than one food item. This menu planning option is allowed only when:

- each food item provides the minimum creditable amount, i.e.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  oz eq for grains (including MMA substitutions) and  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup for fruits (including vegetable substitutions); and
- the combined total of all food items for the component provides the full serving (minimum daily amount) required by the SBP meal pattern, i.e., 1 oz eq of grains (including MMA substitutions) and 1 cup of fruits (including vegetable substitutions).

To credit as a food item for OVS, students must select at least the full serving, except for the fruits component (including vegetable substitutions). The OVS requirement for the fruits component is at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. Fluid milk must be offered as one food item.

SFAs must ensure clear communication with students and staff about the SBP meal pattern requirements and OVS by:

- posting cafeteria signage in all schools that clearly communicates the meal components for all breakfast choices, and indicates what students must select for a reimbursable meal (refer to [Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1); and
- providing adequate training for school food service staff on the SBP meal pattern requirements, including the required servings for each grade group, how to credit foods, and how to recognize reimbursable meals under OVS. For more information, refer to “[Food service staff training](#)” in section 1.

SFAs should consider the serving size of food items and plan breakfast menus so that it is easy for students to select (and school food service staff to identify) reimbursable meals. To implement OVS at breakfast, SFAs must always plan breakfast menus to include the full serving of at least four food items from the three food components (refer to [table 3-3](#)).

For more information on offering the full fruits component as more than one item, refer to “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section. For more information on offering the grains component as more than one item, refer to “[Crediting Grains as One or More Food Items](#)” in this section.

## Milk Component with OVS at Breakfast

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the milk component at breakfast. For more information on the SBP meal pattern requirements for milk, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the “[Milk Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Serving Size for Milk

Milk credits based on volume (fluid ounces). Table 3-6 summarizes the SBP meal pattern servings for the milk component. This is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each breakfast, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as a food item for OVS.

Table 3-6. Meal pattern servings for the milk component at breakfast			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>1, 2</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	1 cup (8 fluid ounces)	5 cups	7 cups
6-8	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
9-12	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must offer a variety (at least two different choices) of unflavored low-fat milk, unflavored or fat-free milk, and flavored fat-free milk (refer to “ <a href="#">Milk Variety</a> ” in section 2). At least one milk choice must be unflavored. <sup>2</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.			

Milk may be used as a beverage, on cereal, or both. SFAs must offer a variety (at least two different choices) of milk with all meals. Choices may include unflavored or flavored low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk. At least one milk choice must be unflavored. For more information, refer to “[Milk Variety](#)” in section 2.

In addition to meeting the USDA meal pattern requirements for the milk component, all milk sold to students in public schools must meet the beverage requirements for milk under C.G.S. [Section 10-221q](#). The state beverage statute requires that milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per

ounce or any artificial sweeteners. These requirements apply to all milk sold to students as part of and separately from reimbursable meals (i.e., a la carte sales). The state beverage statute does not apply to private schools or RCCIs. For more information, refer to “[State Requirement for Milk](#)” in section 2.

## Crediting Milk Items for OVS

OVS at breakfast requires at least four food items, which may include two servings of grains or two servings of fruits but cannot include two servings of milk (refer to table 3-3). Students must select the full 1 cup of milk to credit as one food item for OVS. SFAs may offer larger servings of milk; however, a student’s selection of more than 1 cup of milk credits as only one food item for OVS.

## Milk in Breakfast Smoothies

Milk used in fruit or vegetable smoothies made on site by the SFA credits as the milk component if it is unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk. The requirements below apply to crediting smoothies as food items for OVS at breakfast.

- Smoothies that contain less than 1 cup of milk cannot credit as a milk food item for OVS.
- When reimbursable meals include smoothies, SFAs must also offer a variety of fluid milk on the serving line to meet the USDA’s requirement for a variety of milk options (refer to “[Milk Variety](#)” in section 2).
- Commercial smoothies cannot credit as a milk food item for OVS. They do not meet the USDA’s requirements for fluid milk because they do not comply with the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) standard of identity for milk.

For additional OVS crediting information, refer to “[Fruits and Vegetables in Breakfast Smoothies](#)” in this section. For more information on crediting smoothies, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *[Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)*.

Table 3-7 shows OVS examples and student selections for a breakfast menu that offers four food items, including a smoothie made with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of pureed fruit and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of milk. The pureed fruit credits only as juice and provides one food item (one fruit). The milk is an extra food. It does not credit as a food item for OVS because the amount is less than the required 1-cup serving. Smoothies made with at least 1 cup of milk and at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit or juice may credit as two food items (one milk and one fruit) at breakfast.

Table 3-7. Offering breakfast smoothies made with fruit and milk

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern contribution	Food items
WGR corn muffin, 2½ ounces <sup>1</sup>		G, 2 oz eq	2 G
Kiwi, ½ cup		F, ½ cup <sup>2</sup>	1 F
Strawberry smoothie			
½ cup of unflavored low-fat milk		Extra	0
½ cup of pureed strawberries		F, ½ cup <sup>3</sup>	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Smoothie (1 F)	1	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only one food item (1 F).
Smoothie (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F, 1 M).
Smoothie (1 F) Corn muffin (2 G)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 2 G).
Smoothie (1 F) Kiwi (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (2 F).

Table 3-7, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Kiwi (1 F) Corn muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 2 G, 1 M).
Smoothie (1 F) Corn muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 2 G, 1 M).

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)).

<sup>2</sup> SFAs may choose to credit a ½-cup serving of fruit as one food item (refer to “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section).

<sup>3</sup> Pureed fruit credits only as juice and counts with all other juices toward the weekly juice limit (refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast](#)” in this section).

<sup>4</sup> When reimbursable meals include smoothies, SFAs must also offer a variety of fluid milk on the serving line to meet the USDA’s requirement for a variety of milk options.



## Fruits Component with OVS at Breakfast

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the fruits component at breakfast, including optional vegetable substitutions. For more information on the SBP meal pattern requirements for fruits and vegetables, refer to section 3 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the “[Vegetables Component for Grades K-12](#)” section and “[Fruits Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Serving Size for Fruits

The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, canned (in light syrup, water, or fruit juice), and dried fruits; and pasteurized full-strength fruit juice. A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed but cannot include water or syrup.

A menu item must provide at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of fruit to credit toward part of the fruits component. If the amount of fruit is less than the minimum daily amount, the planned breakfast menu must include additional fruits (or vegetable substitutions) to meet the full serving for each grade group. Selections of amounts less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup do not credit toward the OVS requirement.

Table 3-8 summarizes the SBP meal pattern servings for the fruits component. This This is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each breakfast. Students must select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup for a reimbursable meal under OVS

Table 3-8. Meal pattern servings for the fruits component at breakfast			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>1, 2</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
6-8	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
9-12	1 cup	5 cups	7 cups
<sup>1</sup> SFAs may substitute vegetables for the fruits component if the substitutions meet the USDA's requirements (refer to “ <a href="#">Vegetable Substitutions</a> ” in this section). <sup>2</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications.			

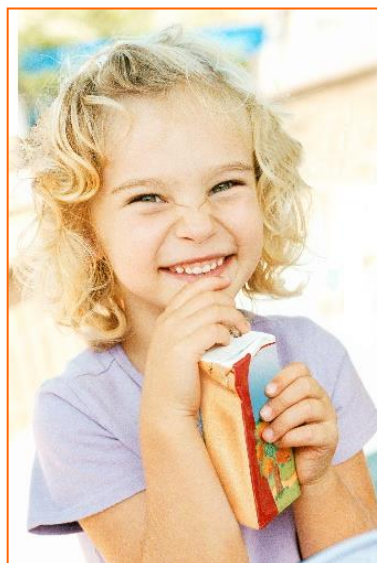
A food item must contain at least  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution) to credit toward part of the fruits component. The combined total of all fruit food items (including vegetable substitutions) must provide at least 1 cup for all grades.

## Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast

Fruit juice together with vegetable juice (including fruit/vegetable juice blends) cannot exceed half of the weekly amount of the fruits component offered at breakfast. SFAs must calculate the weekly juice limit based on the amount of fruits (and vegetable substitutions, if offered) that students are allowed to select at a given meal, regardless of the number of options or variety of fruits available. For example, if a five-day breakfast menu for grades 9-12 offers 5 cups of the fruits component over the week, the breakfast menu may offer up to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cups of juice over the week. If the weekly menu includes larger amounts of fruits and vegetables, the weekly juice limit also increases.

When calculating the total amount of juice offered during the week, SFAs must count all sources of 100 percent juice available to students at breakfast during the week. This includes juice that is fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate; frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice; pureed fruits and vegetables in fruit/vegetable smoothies; and juice from canned fruit served in 100 percent juice, unless the canned fruit is drained or served as an extra food.

Drained fruit and canned fruit in light syrup or water do not count toward the weekly juice limit. The meal patterns allow a serving of canned fruit to include the juice in which it is packed. For example, canned peaches ( $\frac{3}{8}$  cup) in juice ( $\frac{1}{8}$  cup) credit as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component. The juice from canned fruit counts toward the weekly juice limit if the SFA credits the juice toward the fruits component.



However, juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit if the SFA plans the juice as an extra food that does not credit toward the meal patterns. For example, if food service personnel portion  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of canned fruit in a  $5\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce container, then add the juice **after** measuring the full  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of fruit, the juice does not count toward the weekly juice limit.

For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#), and sections 3 and 4 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).



## Assorted Juice Choices at Breakfast

Fruit juice together with vegetable juice (including fruit and vegetable juice blends) cannot exceed **half** of the weekly fruits offered at breakfast. When the daily breakfast menu offers 1 cup of fruit (minimum daily amount), schools cannot offer and students cannot select more than ½ cup of juice.

When SFAs allow students to select two ½-cup servings from a variety of daily fruit and juice choices, students may select either two fruits, or one fruit and one juice. **Students cannot select two servings of juice because this exceeds the weekly juice limit.** Each school's breakfast menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate the amount of juice that students may select with each meal.

If the breakfast menu offers more than 1 cup of fruits daily, the maximum amount of juice that students may select also increases. For example, the breakfast menu offers a variety of four ½-cup fruit choices (2 cups total) each day and allows students to select all four choices. With this menu, students may select up to 1 cup of juice daily (half of the daily 2 cups of fruit).

Table 3-9 shows sample language for assorted fruit and juice choices with OVS when the SFAs allow students to select two ½-cup servings of fruit to meet the required 1-cup serving. This breakfast menu offers 5 cups of fruit per week (1 cup per day). Therefore, SFAs cannot offer, and students cannot select, more than ½ cup of juice per day. For more information, refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast](#)” in this section.



**Table 3-9. Sample language for assorted fruit and juice choices**

Example 1	Example 2
Choose 2 fruits or 1 fruit and 1 juice	Choose up to 2 fruits (no more than 1 juice)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh fruit</li> <li>• Canned fruit, drained <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice</li> <li>• Fresh vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh fruit</li> <li>• Canned fruit, drained <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice</li> <li>• Fresh vegetables</li> </ul>
<sup>1</sup> If canned fruit is not drained, students cannot select juice and canned fruit because this exceeds the weekly juice limit (refer to “ <a href="#">Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast</a> ” in this section).	

## Crediting Fruit Items

SFAs may choose to offer the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the fruits component as more than one food item. At breakfast,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit credits as one food item for OVS. SFAs may choose to credit 1 cup of fruit as either one or two food items at breakfast only. **This provision does not apply to fruit servings offered at lunch.**





This practice is at the discretion of the menu planner. If implemented, SFAs must clearly communicate this information to staff and students to minimize confusion and ensure that students are selecting reimbursable meals, and staff are correctly identifying reimbursable meals. The USDA allows SFAs to make these decisions for maximum flexibility in menu planning.

### Crediting 1 cup of fruit as two food items

Table 3-10 shows how crediting 1 cup of fruit as two food items affects a student's selections for reimbursable breakfasts with OVS. For this example, the planned breakfast menu includes:

- two grains (1 oz eq each) from two WGR mini-blueberry muffins (2 oz eq total);
- 1 cup of blueberries (credited as two food items); and
- one milk (choice of 1 cup of unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk).

Since the SFA credits 1 cup of blueberries as two food items (two fruits), the breakfast menu offers five food items. Students may select the blueberries (two food items) and milk (one food item) for a reimbursable meal. This selection includes three food items including two fruits and one milk.



Table 3-10. Example of crediting 1 cup of fruit as two items		
Planned breakfast menu		Student selects
 2 oz eq (2 G)		 1 cup (2 F)
 1 cup (1 M)		 1 M
		Reimbursable meal? Yes

### Crediting 1 cup of fruit as one food item

Table 3-11 shows how crediting 1 cup of fruit as one food item affects a student's selections for reimbursable breakfasts with OVS. For this example, the planned breakfast menu includes:

- two grains (1 oz eq each) from two WGR mini-blueberry muffins (2 oz eq total);
- 1 cup of blueberries (credited as one food item); and
- one milk (choice of 1 cup of unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk).

Since the SFA credits 1 cup of blueberries as one food item (one fruit), the breakfast menu offers four food items. Students cannot select the blueberries (one food item) and milk (one food item) for a reimbursable breakfast because it includes only two food items. For a reimbursable meal, students must also select at least one 1 oz-eq mini-muffin (one food item).

Table 3-11. Example of crediting 1 cup of fruit as one item	
<b>Planned breakfast menu</b>  2 oz eq (2 G)      1 cup (1 F)      1 cup (1 M)	<b>Student selects</b>  1 F      1 M  <b>Reimbursable meal?</b> No

To encourage selections of reimbursable meals, it is generally advantageous for SFAs to credit 1 cup of fruit as two food items. However, there may be some situations when SFAs might want to credit 1 cup of fruit as only one food item. One example is when schools serve whole apples as part of assorted daily fresh whole fruit choices at breakfast, such as apples, bananas, and oranges.



The FBG indicates that one 125-138 count apple credits as 1 cup of fruit. However, one banana (150 count) and one orange (138 count) each credit as ½ cup of fruit. When implementing OVS, it might be confusing to staff and students to credit one apple as two fruits (two food items), while one banana and one orange each credit as one fruit (one food item). In this situation, SFAs could choose to simplify OVS for students and staff by crediting all fresh fruit choices at breakfast as one fruit (one food item).

The simplest method of helping students choose the required ½-cup serving of fruits (or vegetable substitutions) for a reimbursable breakfast with OVS is to offer all fruits (and vegetable substitutions) in ½-cup servings and allow students to choose any two.

## Vegetable Substitutions

The SBP meal pattern does not require the vegetables component. Per Section 743, Division A of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260), SFAs may substitute any vegetables (including potatoes and other starchy vegetables) for the fruits component at any breakfast, without including vegetables from other subgroups in the weekly menu. This flexibility is in effect for school year 2021-22.

## Fruits and Vegetables in Breakfast Smoothies

Smoothies made from any combination of pureed fruits and vegetables, 100 percent juice (including vegetable/fruit juice blends), and milk credit as two food items for OVS at breakfast if they contain at least 1 cup of milk (refer to “[Milk in Breakfast Smoothies](#)” in this section); and at least ½ cup of pureed fruits, pureed vegetables, or any combination of 100 percent fruit or vegetables juice. Students who select the smoothie (two food items) must also select at least one other food item for a reimbursable meal.

Pureed fruits and vegetables used in smoothies credit only as **juice**. SFAs must count pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies with all other juices toward the weekly juice limit. For more information, refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast](#)” in this section.

Yogurt and soy yogurt credit as the MMA component (grains substitution) in school-made smoothies. For example, a smoothie made with ½ cup of pureed fruit, ½ cup of low-fat yogurt, and ½ cup of low-fat milk credits as two food items (one fruit and one grain from the MMA substitution). In this example, the milk is an extra food. It cannot credit as a food item for OVS because the serving is less than the 1 cup. For more information on MMA substitutions for the grains component, refer to “[MMA Substitutions](#)” in this section.

For more information on crediting smoothies, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#), and [USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in the Child Nutrition Programs](#).







## Duplicate Fruit Selections at Breakfast

The SBP meal pattern requires at least 1 cup of fruit daily for all grades. If the SFA offers a variety of different ½-cup servings of fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions), students must be allowed to select up to two choices. Students may select two of the same fruit (duplicate selections) or two different fruits to credit as two food items for OVS. To credit as one food item for OVS, students must select at least ½ cup of fruit.

If the daily breakfast menu offers a variety of ½-cup juice choices, students cannot select more than one juice to comply with the weekly juice limit. The menu signage must clearly communicate this requirement. For more information, refer to “[Assorted Juice Choice at Breakfast](#)” in this section.

Tables 3-12 and 3-13 show examples of OVS with a breakfast menu that allows duplicate fruit selections. Since this menu is planned to allow any two fruit choices, students may select two ½-cup servings of the same fruit (two servings of blueberries or two servings of strawberries), or two ½-cup servings of different fruits (one serving of blueberries and one serving of strawberries). Each ½-cup serving of fruit credits as one food item (one fruit) for OVS.

Table 3-12. Examples of reimbursable breakfast selections with duplicate fruits		
<b>Planned breakfast menu (five food items)</b>		
• 2 oz eq of grains	Two 1-ounce WGR pancakes	
• 1 cup of fruit <i>Choose any two</i>	½ cup of blueberries ½ cup of strawberries	
• 1 cup of milk <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk	
Reimbursable meals		
		
2 F and 2 G	2 F and 2 G	2 F and 2 G

When breakfast menus allow duplicate fruit choices, the school's meal identification signage must clearly instruct students on how much food to select daily from each component for a reimbursable meal, based on the planned serving sizes for each menu item.

Table 3-13 shows OVS examples with a menu that allows students to select one or two ½-cup servings of fruit with each breakfast. Since this menu is planned to allow any two fruit choices, students may select two ½-cup servings of the same fruit, or two ½-cup servings of different fruits. To implement this menu, schools must have signage located on the serving line near the fruits component that informs students of this choice. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1.

Table 3-13. Offering duplicate fruit selections at breakfast			
Component	Planned breakfast menu	Meal pattern contribution	Food items
<b>Grains</b>	WGR pancakes, 3 ounces <sup>1</sup>	G, 2 oz eq	2 G
<b>Fruits</b> <i>Choose one or two</i>	Strawberries, ½ cup Blueberries, ½ cup Watermelon, ½ cup Cinnamon applesauce, ½ cup	F, 1 cup	2 F
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, 1 cup Unflavored fat-free milk, 1 cup Flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M
<b>Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).</b>			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Pancakes (2 G) Watermelon (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Pancakes (2 G) Blueberries (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 F).

Table 3-13, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Strawberries (1 F) Blueberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).
Watermelon (1 F) Watermelon (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).
Pancakes (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Pancakes (2 G) Blueberries (1 F) Strawberries (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 2 F).
Pancakes (2 G) Cinnamon applesauce (1 F) Cinnamon applesauce (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 2 F). Students may select two servings of the same fruit because the planned menu allows any two fruit choices.
Pancakes (2 G) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Pancakes (2 G) Blueberries (1 F) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	5	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains five food items (2 G, 2 F, 1 M).

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)).



## Dried Fruit

Dried fruit (such as raisins, apricots, dried cherries, dried cranberries, dried blueberries, and mixed dried fruit) credits as twice the volume served. For example,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dried fruit credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the fruits component, i.e., one food item for OVS at breakfast. SFAs may choose to credit  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of dried fruit as one or two food items for OVS at breakfast. For more information, refer to “[Crediting Fruit Items](#)” in this section.

Table 3-14 shows OVS examples with a breakfast menu that credits  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of raisins as two food items. The menu includes four foods that provide five food items. Students who select the raisins (two fruits) must select one other food item for a reimbursable breakfast.



**Table 3-14. Offering dried fruit as two food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Whole-grain banana muffin, 2 ounces <sup>1</sup>		G, 1 oz eq	1 G
Whole-grain granola cereal, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup <sup>1</sup>		G, 1 oz eq	1 G
Raisins, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup <sup>2</sup>		F, 1 cup	2 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		Milk, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Raisins (2 F) Banana muffin (1 G)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 G).
Raisins (2 F) Cereal (1 G)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 G).

**Table 3-14, continued**

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Raisins (2 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Cereal (1 G) Banana muffin (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Cereal (1 G) Raisins (2 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 G, 2 F and 1 M).
Banana muffin (1 G) Raisins (2 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 G, 2 F, and 1 M).
Cereal (1 G) Banana muffin (1 G) Raisins (2 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G and 2 F).
<p><sup>1</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> and <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>).</p> <p><sup>2</sup> SFAs may choose to credit ½ cup of dried fruit as one or two food items for OVS at breakfast.</p>			

## Grains Component with OVS at Breakfast

This section addresses the OVS requirements for the grains component at breakfast, including optional MMA substitutions. Grains served at breakfast must meet the same WGR criteria as grains served at lunch (refer to “[WGR Requirement](#)” in section 2). For more information on the SBP meal pattern requirements for grains, refer to section 3 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the “[Grains Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Serving Size for Grains

Table 3-15 summarizes the SBP meal pattern servings for the grains component at breakfast. The daily amount is the minimum amount that SFAs must offer with each breakfast, and the minimum amount that students must select to credit as a food item for OVS.

Table 3-15. Meal pattern servings for the grains component at breakfast <sup>1</sup>			
Grade group	Minimum daily serving <sup>2,3,4</sup>	Minimum weekly serving	
		Five-day week	Seven-day week
K-5	1 oz eq	7 oz eq	10 oz eq
6-8	1 oz eq	8 oz eq	11 oz eq
9-12	1 oz eq	9 oz eq	12½ oz eq
<sup>1</sup> All grains must be WGR. SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> and <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> ). <sup>2</sup> SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. <sup>3</sup> SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements. <sup>4</sup> SFAs may substitute 1 oz eq of the MMA component for 1 oz eq of the grains component after offering at 1 oz eq of grains (refer to “ <a href="#">MMA Substitutions</a> ” in this section).			

SFAs have two options for calculating the oz eq for creditable commercial products and foods made from scratch.

- **Method 1: Oz eq chart (weights or volume):** This method determines the oz eq for creditable grain products and recipes using the weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s oz eq chart. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- **Method 2: Creditable grains:** This method determines the serving size for grain products and recipes based on the amount of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per serving. For groups A-G (baked goods), 1 oz eq of grains must provide 16 grams of creditable grains. For group H (cereal grains) and group I (RTE breakfast cereals), 1 oz eq of grains must provide 28 grams of creditable grains or meet the specified weights and volumes.

For more information on both methods, refer to “[Calculation Methods for Crediting Grains](#)” in section 2, and the CSDE’s resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).

## Crediting Grains for OVS versus the SBP Meal Pattern

At breakfast, the crediting of grains as food items for OVS is different from the crediting of grains for the SBP meal pattern. Each procedure has a different rounding requirement.

- **Meal pattern:** When crediting grain products toward the WGR requirement and the minimum daily and weekly servings for the SBP meal pattern, SFAs must round down the total amount of oz eq to the **nearest ¼ oz eq**.
- **OVS:** When crediting grain products as food items for OVS, SFAs must round down the total amount of oz eq to the **nearest whole number of oz eq** (refer to “[Multiple Servings of Grains](#)” in this section).

For example, a 1.9-oz eq WGR product credits as 1¾ oz eq of grains toward the daily and weekly meal pattern requirements but credits as only one food item for OVS. Table 3-16 shows some examples of crediting grains for OVS and the SBP meal pattern.



Table 3-16. Crediting grains for OVS and the SBP meal pattern

Planned grains component	Product weight (ounces)	USDA serving size (oz eq chart)		Meal pattern contribution (oz eq) <sup>1</sup>	OVS contribution (food items) <sup>1</sup>
		Group	Required weight (ounces)		
Whole-grain bagel	2	B	1	2	2
Whole-grain roll	1.49	B	1	1.25	1
WGR pancakes	2.75	C	1.2	2.25	2
WGR corn muffin	2	C	1.2	1.5	1
WGR apple muffin	2	D	2	1	1
WGR French toast	4	E	2.4	1.5	1

<sup>1</sup> Amounts less than the full oz eq do not credit as a food item for OVS. For OVS at breakfast, SFAs may choose to credit a 2-oz eq grain product as one or two food items (refer to “[Multiple Servings of Grains](#)” and “[Crediting Grains as One or More Food Items](#)” in this section).



## Multiple Servings of Grains

Breakfast menu items that provide more than 1 oz eq of grains (or MMA substitutions) may credit as more than one food item for OVS, if the additional amount of grains (or MMA) provides at least 1 oz eq. For example, SFAs may credit:

- a 2-oz eq WGR muffin or bagel as two food items (two grains);
- a 3-oz eq WGR muffin or bagel as three food items (three grains); and
- a 2-oz eq omelet offered as a MMA substitution as two food items (two grains).



**Amounts less than 1 oz eq do not credit as a food item for OVS.** When crediting grains and MMA substitutions as food items for OVS, SFAs must round down to the nearest whole number of oz eq. For example, a 1½-oz eq WGR muffin credits as only one food item (one grain) for OVS. Table 3-17 shows examples of crediting grains and MMA substitutions as food items for OVS at breakfast.

Table 3-17. Crediting grains and MMA substitutions for OVS at breakfast		
Amount of product	Daily and weekly meal pattern contribution	Number of food items (grains) for OVS
¼ oz eq	¼ oz eq	0
½ oz eq	½ oz eq	0
1 oz eq	1 oz eq	1
1½ oz eq	1½ oz eq	1
1¾ oz eq	1¾ oz eq	1
2 oz eq	2 oz eq	2
2½ oz eq	2½ oz eq	2
2¾ oz eq	2¾ oz eq	2
3 oz eq	3 oz eq	3

## Crediting Grains as One or More Food Items

SFAs may choose to credit 2-oz eq grain products as one or two food items. SFAs may choose to credit 3-oz eq grain products as one, two, or three food items. These decisions are at the discretion of the SFA and apply only to breakfast menus. The USDA allows SFAs to make these decisions for maximum flexibility in menu planning. **This option does not apply to grain servings offered at lunch.**



Regardless of how SFAs decide to credit grains for OVS, all grains must count toward the minimum daily and weekly grains and the USDA's weekly dietary specifications. If breakfasts regularly include larger servings of grains, it might be difficult for menus to comply with the weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For information on planning menus to meet the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

### Crediting 2 oz eq of grains as two food items

Table 3-18 shows how crediting 2 oz eq of grains as two food items affects the number of other food items that students must select for a reimbursable breakfast with OVS. For this example, the planned breakfast includes:

- one 4-ounce WGR blueberry muffin (2 oz eq), credited as two grain items;
- two fruit items from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of strawberries and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of orange juice (1 cup); and
- one milk item (1 cup) from a choice of unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk.

Since the SFA credits the 4-ounce muffin as two food items (two grains), the breakfast menu offers five food items. Students may select the muffin (two food items) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit (one food item) for a reimbursable breakfast. This selection contains three food items, including two grains and one fruit.

Table 3-18. Example of crediting 2 oz eq of grains as two food items	
<b>Planned breakfast menu</b>  <div> <div>2 oz eq (2 G)</div> <div><math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup (1 F)</div> <div><math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup (1 F)</div> <div>1 cup (1 M)</div> </div>	<b>Student selects</b>  <div> <div>2 G</div> <div>1 F</div> </div>
<b>Reimbursable meal? Yes</b>	







### Crediting 2 oz eq of grains as one food item

Table 3-19 shows how crediting 2 oz eq of grains as one food item affects the number of other food items that students must select for a reimbursable breakfast with OVS. For this example, the planned breakfast includes:

- one 4-ounce WGR blueberry muffin (2 oz eq), credited as one grain item;
- two fruit items from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of strawberries and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of orange juice (1 cup); and
- one milk item (1 cup) from a choice of unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk.

Since the SFA credits the 4-ounce muffin as one food item (one grain), the breakfast menu offers four food items. Students cannot select the muffin (one food item) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit (one food item) for a reimbursable breakfast because it includes only two food items. Students must also select at least one additional food item (juice or milk) for a reimbursable meal.

Table 3-19. Example of crediting 2 oz eq of grains as one food item			
Planned breakfast menu		Student selects	
			
2 oz eq (1 G)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 F)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 F)	1 cup (1 M)
		Reimbursable meal? No	

SFAs must clearly communicate the crediting information for grains at breakfast to staff and students to minimize confusion and ensure that students are selecting reimbursable meals. Signage must be located at the beginning of the serving line and near each food component to indicate what and how much students can take for a reimbursable meal.

Table 3-20 shows OVS examples with a breakfast menu that credits a 2-ounce whole-grain bagel (2 oz eq) as two food items. Students who select the bagel must also select at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit for a reimbursable breakfast.

**Table 3-20. Offering 2 oz eq of grains as two food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Whole-grain bagel, 2 ounces		G, 2 oz eq	2 G
Orange, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Banana, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Orange (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F, 1 M).
Bagel (2 G) Orange (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 F).
Bagel (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Orange (1 F) Banana (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).
Bagel (2 G) Orange (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Bagel (2 G) Orange (1 F) Banana (1 F) Milk (1 M)	5	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains five food items (2 G, 2 F, 1 M).

### Offering 1 Oz Eq of Grains as Two Separate Foods

When the breakfast menu offers the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the grains component as two separate food items, students must select both food items to credit as one food item for OVS. Selections of less than 1 oz eq cannot credit.

Table 3-21 shows an example of OVS when the breakfast menu offers the full serving of the grains component as two separate food items with the same oz eq. The planned breakfast menu provides 1 oz eq of grains from two ½-oz eq WGR blueberry mini-muffins. Students must take both muffins to credit as one food item for OVS. One muffin alone cannot credit as a food item because the serving is less than 1 oz eq.

**Note:** When the menu offers the full serving of the grains component as two food items, it might be more difficult for students to select the amount required to credit as one food item for reimbursable breakfasts. A better menu planning approach is to offer all grains in at least 1 oz eq so that any student selection credits as at least one food item for OVS.


Table 3-21. Offering 1 oz eq of grains as two separate ½ oz eq food items				
Planned grains component (1 oz eq)	Student selects	Meal pattern contribution (oz eq)	OVS contribution (food items)	Additional food items student must select for reimbursable breakfast
Two WGR 1-ounce blueberry mini-muffins, (2 ounces total) <sup>1</sup> 	Two 1-ounce muffins	1	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least one other food item
	One 1-ounce muffin <sup>2</sup>	½	0	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving of at least two other food items
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE's resources, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> and <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> ). <sup>2</sup> Selections of less than 1 oz eq of grains do not credit as a food item for OVS (refer to “ <a href="#">Multiple Servings of Grains</a> ” in this section).				

Table 3-22 shows OVS examples with a breakfast menu that offers 1 oz eq of grains from two separate ½-oz eq blueberry mini-muffins.

Table 3-22. OVS examples for 1 oz eq of grains as two separate ½ oz eq food items			
Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
WGR 1-ounce blueberry mini-muffins, two		G, 1 oz eq	1 G
Orange juice, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Strawberries, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Orange juice (1 F) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 G, 2 F, 1 M).
Mini-muffins, one (½ oz eq G) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F, 1 M). Selections of less than 1 oz eq of grains do not credit as a food item for OVS (refer to “ <a href="#">Multiple Servings of Grains</a> ” in this section).
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Orange juice (1 F) Strawberries (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 2 F).

Table 3-22, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Orange juice (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Mini-muffins, two (1 G) Milk (1 M)	2	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 M) and is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Orange juice (1 F) Strawberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).



### Offering Two Food Items that are each at Least 1 Oz Eq

When the breakfast menu offers the grains component as two food items that are each at least 1 oz eq, students may select either one to credit as one grain item for OVS. The same concept applies to MMA offered as grain substitutions. Table 3-23 shows OVS examples with this menu planning approach.

SFAs must serve additional grains on some days to meet the minimum weekly requirements for each grade group at breakfast (refer to [table 3-15](#) in this section).

SFAs may serve larger amounts if the menu does not exceed the weekly dietary specifications. For information on meeting the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

Table 3-23. Offering two 1-oz eq grain items

Planned grains component	Student selects	Meal pattern contribution	OVS contribution (food items)	Additional food items student must select for reimbursable breakfast
<b>Breakfast 1:</b> <b>2 oz eq</b> Oatmeal, ½ cup (1 oz eq) WGR corn muffin, 1.2 ounces (1 oz eq) <sup>1</sup> 	Oatmeal	2 oz eq	2	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
	Oatmeal	1 oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of one other food item.
	WGR corn muffin	1 oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of one other food item.
<b>Breakfast 2:</b> <b>2 oz eq</b> Oatmeal, ½ cup (1 oz eq) Low-fat yogurt, ½ cup (1 oz eq) <i>MMA substitution</i> 	Oatmeal	2 oz eq	2	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
	Oatmeal	1 oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of one other food item.
	Low-fat yogurt	1 oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of one other food item.
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE's resources, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> and <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> ).				

## Offering More than 1 Oz Eq of Grains as Two Food Items with Different Oz Eq

When the breakfast menu offers more than 1 oz eq of the grains component as two foods with different serving sizes, only the food that provides at least 1 oz eq credits as one food item for OVS. Selections of less than 1 oz eq cannot credit. The same concept applies to MMA offered as grain substitutions. Table 3-24 shows OVS examples with this menu planning approach.



Table 3-24. Offering more than 1 oz eq of grains as two food items with different oz eq				
Planned grains component	Student selects	Meal pattern contribution	OVS contribution (food items)	Additional food items student must select for reimbursable breakfast
<b>Breakfast 1:</b> <b>1½ oz eq:</b> Whole-wheat toast, 1 slice (1 oz eq) Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon (½ oz eq) <i>MMA substitution</i>	Toast, 1 slice	1½ oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the minimum daily serving of one other food item.
	Toast, 1 slice	1 oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the minimum daily serving of one other food item.
	 Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon	½ oz eq <sup>2</sup>	0	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full serving of at least two other food items.  <b>Note:</b> Selections of less than 1 oz eq do not credit as a food item for OVS (refer to “ <a href="#">Multiple Servings of Grains</a> ” in this section).



Table 3-24, *continued*

Planned grains component	Student selects	Meal pattern contribution	OVS contribution (food items)	Additional food items student must select for reimbursable breakfast
<b>Breakfast 2:</b> <b>3 oz eq:</b> Whole-wheat mini bagel, 1 ounce (1 oz eq) Hard-boiled egg, one (2 oz eq) <i>MMA substitution</i> 	Mini bagel, 1 ounce	3 oz eq	3	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
	Egg, one	2 oz eq	2	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables.
	Mini bagel, 1 ounce	1 oz eq	1	At least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the minimum daily serving of one other food item.

## Duplicate Grain Selections at Breakfast

SFAs may choose whether to allow students to select duplicate grain items at breakfast. Breakfast menus may offer two or more different grain items of at least 1 oz eq, and allow students to take any two grain items. A student's selection of two of the same grain items (duplicate selections) credits as two food items (grains) for OVS.

Tables 3-25 and 3-26 show OVS examples of reimbursable meals for a breakfast menu with five food items, including duplicate grains. Since the planned breakfast menu allows any two grain choices, students may select two pieces of toast or two servings of cereal to credit as two food items (grains) for OVS. For a reimbursable breakfast, students must also select at least ½ cup of fruit.

The school's meal identification signage must clearly instruct students on how much food to select daily from each component for a reimbursable meal, based on the planned serving sizes for each grade group. For this example, the cafeteria signage must communicate that students may select either:

- two servings of whole-grain cereal;
- two servings of whole-grain toast; or
- one serving of each.

This signage must be located on the serving line near the grains component. For more information, refer to "[Meal Identification Signage](#)" in section 1.

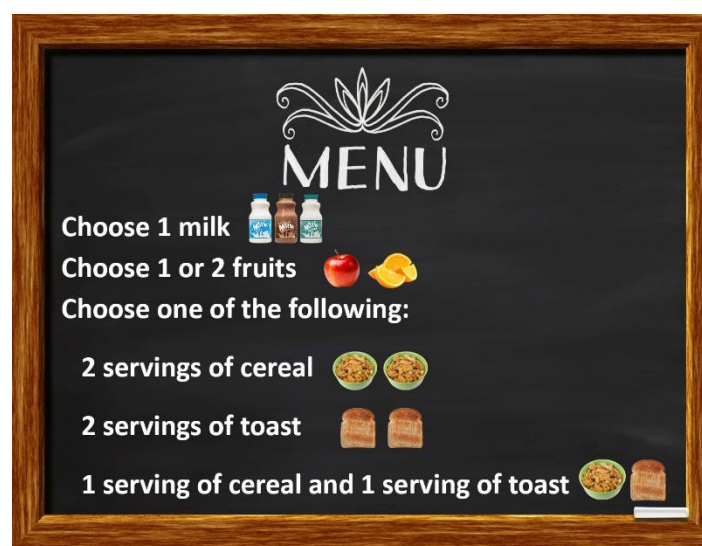


Table 3-25. Examples of reimbursable breakfast selections with duplicate grains





Planned breakfast menu (five food items)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>2 oz eq of grains</b> <i>Choose any two</i></li></ul>	1 oz eq of whole-grain cereal 1 oz eq of whole-grain toast	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1 cup of fruit</b> <i>Choose any two</i></li></ul>	½ cup of cantaloupe ½ cup of fresh plums	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1 cup of milk</b> <i>Choose one</i></li></ul>	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk.	
Reimbursable meals		
 <p>2 G and 1 F</p>	 <p>2 G and 1 F</p>	 <p>2 G and 1 F</p>

Table 3-26. Offering duplicate grain selections at breakfast

Component	Planned breakfast menu	Meal pattern contribution	Food items
<b>Grains</b> <i>Choose one or two</i>	Whole-grain cereal flakes, 1 cup	G, 1 oz eq	1 G
	Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce <sup>1</sup>	G, 1 oz eq	1 G
<b>Fruits</b> <i>Choose one or two</i>	Cantaloupe, ½ cup	F, ½ cup	1 F
	Fresh plums, ½ cup	F, ½ cup	1 F
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, 1 cup	M, 1 cup	1 M
	Unflavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		
	Flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Cereal (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, and 1 M).
Toast (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, and 1 M).
Cereal, 2 servings (2 G) Cantaloupe (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Cereal, 2 servings (2 G) Plum (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).

Table 3-26, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Cereal (1 G) Toast (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Cereal (1 G) Toast (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Plum (1 F) Cantaloupe (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F and 1 M).
Toast, 2 servings (2 G) Plum (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G and 1 F).
Toast (1 G) Cantaloupe (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 F).

## MMA Substitutions

The SBP meal pattern does not require the MMA component. SFAs may choose to offer 1 oz eq of MMA in place of 1 oz eq of grains if the menu already includes 1 oz eq of grains. For example, a breakfast menu that includes a 1-oz eq whole-grain bagel may also include 2 tablespoons of peanut butter (1 oz eq of MMA). MMA substitutions credit toward the daily and weekly servings of grains.



MMA used as grain substitutions credit on an ounce-per-ounce basis, i.e., 1 oz eq of MMA credits as 1 oz eq of grains. The amount of MMA required to provide 1 oz eq of grains (one grain item) includes:

- 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish (edible portion as served, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients);
- 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended);
- 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread, or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended);
- ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas;
- ½ large egg;
- 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, and sunflower seed butter;
- 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts;
- 2.2 ounces of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein;
- 1 ounce of tempeh that contains specific ingredients;
- 3 ounces of surimi;
- ½ cup of yogurt or soy yogurt; and
- 1 ounce of APP that meets the USDA's APP requirements (appendix A of the SBP regulations).

For guidance on the crediting requirements for tofu, tempeh, surimi, and APPs, refer to the CSDE's [\*Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12\*](#).

### Menu planning options for MMA substitutions

The SFA decides whether a MMA substitution credits as a food item for OVS. The USDA allows two options for crediting MMA at breakfast.

- **Option 1:** Offer a serving of MMA as a **grain substitution** that counts toward the weekly grains requirement. MMA offered in place of grains credit as grain food items for OVS. MMA substitutions credit toward the daily and weekly servings of grains. Tables 3-27 and 3-28 show examples of menu planning and OVS using this option.
- **Option 2:** Offer a serving of MMA as an **extra food** that does not count toward the weekly grains requirement. MMA offered as extras do not credit as food items for OVS. When SFAs use this option, the breakfast menu must include at least four food items in addition to the extra MMA item. Tables 3-29 and 3-39 show examples of menu planning and OVS using this option.

To simplify OVS for staff and students, the CSDE strongly recommends consistent crediting of MMA at breakfast. SFAs should choose one option and credit foods the same way for all breakfast menus.

For both options, MMA must count toward the weekly dietary specifications. The inclusion of MMA cannot cause the breakfast menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fats, and sodium. For information on planning menus to meet the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*.

### Offering MMA as one or more food items

SFAs may choose to credit breakfast foods with 2 oz eq of MMA as 1 oz eq of grain substitution and 1 oz eq of extra food. For example, an egg omelet made with one egg contains 2 oz eq of MMA. SFAs may choose to credit the omelet as any of the following:

- 2 oz eq of MMA substitutions (two food items);
- 1 oz eq of MMA substitution (one food item) and 1 oz eq of extra food; or
- 2 oz eq of MMA as extra foods (zero food items).

These decisions are at the discretion of the SFA and apply only to breakfast menus. **This option does not apply to MMA offered at lunch.**

The USDA allows SFAs to make these decisions for maximum flexibility in menu planning. SFAs must clearly communicate this information to staff and students, to minimize confusion and ensure that students are selecting reimbursable meals.

When considering how to credit MMA as grain substitutions, SFAs must ensure that breakfast menus meet the OVS requirements. Breakfast menus must include at least four food items from the three food components. Students must select at least three food items for a reimbursable meal, including at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered). For more information, refer to [table 3-1](#) and [table 3-2](#) in this section.

SFAs should ensure that school food service personnel receive appropriate training on how to identify reimbursable breakfasts under OVS. SFAs must clearly communicate with school food service staff regarding how to credit MMA for OVS at breakfast. The cafeteria must also have appropriate signage that clearly communicates the breakfast meal components, and what students must select for a reimbursable meal. Signage must be located on the serving line near the food component to which it applies. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1.

Table 3-27 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with five food items, including a MMA (peanut butter) offered as a grain substitution (option 1).



**Table 3-27. Offering MMA substitution in a menu with five food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Whole-wheat bagel, 1-ounce		G, 1 oz eq	1 G
Peanut butter, 1 ounce		G, 1 oz eq (MMA substitution)	1 G
Red apple slices, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Blueberries, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter, (1 G) Blueberries (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Bagel (1 G) Blueberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F and 1 M).
Blueberries (1 F) Red apple slices (1 F) Cheese (1 G)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 G from MMA substitution).

Table 3-27, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter, (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 M, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Peanut butter (1 G) Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 1 M, 1 G from MMA substitution).
Bagel (1 G) Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Blueberries (1 F) Peanut butter (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 1 M, 1 G from MMA substitution).



Table 3-28 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with seven food items, including two MMA (hard-boiled egg) offered as grain substitutions (option 1).

Table 3-28. Offering MMA substitution in a menu with seven food items			
Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Whole-wheat blueberry muffin, 4 ounces		G, 2 oz eq	2 G
Hard-boiled egg, 1 egg		G, 2 oz eq (MMA substitution)	2 G
Red grapes, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Pineapple tidbits, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Egg (2 G) Muffin (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	5	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains five food items (1 F, 4 G including 2 MMA substitutions).
Egg (2 G) Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	5	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains five food items (1 M, 4 G including 2 MMA substitutions) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg (2 G) Muffin (2 G) Red grapes (1 F)	5	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains five food items (1 F, 4 G including 2 MMA substitutions).

Table 3-28, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M) Red grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 M, 1 F).
Egg (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 1 M, 2 G from MMA substitution).
Egg (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 M, 2 G from MMA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 2 G from MMA substitution).



Table 3-29 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with four food items, including one MMA (peanut butter) offered as an extra food item (option 2).

Table 3-29. Offering a MMA as an extra food in a menu with four food items			
Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Whole-wheat bagel, 1-ounce		G, 1 oz eq	1 G
Peanut butter, 1 ounce		None (extra food) <sup>1</sup>	0
Red apple slices, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Blueberries, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Bagel (1 G) Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Blueberries (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Peanut butter (extra) <sup>1</sup> Red apple slices (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F, 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter (extra) <sup>1</sup> Blueberries (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F).

Table 3-29, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter (extra) <sup>1</sup> Milk (1 M)	2	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 M) and is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Blueberries (1 F) Red apple slices (1 F) Peanut butter (extra) <sup>1</sup>	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (2 F).
Blueberries (1 F) Peanut butter (extra) <sup>1</sup> Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F, 1 M).
<sup>1</sup> MMA planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.			

Table 3-30 shows OVS examples for a breakfast menu with five food items, including two MMA (hard-boiled egg) offered as extra food items (option 2).

<b>Table 3-30. Offering a MMA as an extra food in a menu with five food items</b>			
<b>Planned breakfast menu</b>		<b>Meal pattern components</b>	<b>Food items</b>
Whole-wheat blueberry muffin, 4 ounces		G, 2 oz eq	2 G
Hard-boiled egg, 1 egg		None (extra food) <sup>1</sup>	0
Red grapes, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Pineapple tidbits, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
<b>Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).</b>			
<b>Student selects</b>	<b>Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i></b>	<b>Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i></b>	<b>Reimbursable meal?</b>
Egg (extra) <sup>1</sup> Muffin (2 G) Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 F).
Egg (extra) <sup>1</sup> Pineapple tidbits (1 F) Milk (1 M)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 F, 1 M).
Egg (extra) <sup>1</sup> Muffin (2 G) Red grapes (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 F).
Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M) Red grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 M, 1 F).



Table 3-30, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Egg (extra) <sup>1</sup> Muffin (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg (extra) <sup>1</sup> Milk (1 M)	1	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only one food item (1 M) and is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Egg (extra) <sup>1</sup> Pineapple tidbits (1 F)	1	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only one food item (1 F).

<sup>1</sup> MMA planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.



## Combination Breakfast Foods

Combination breakfast foods often contain at least one serving of grains and one serving of MMA. Examples include:

- breakfast burritos with scrambled egg (MMA) in a whole-corn tortilla shell (grains); and
- breakfast sandwiches with ham and cheese (MMA) on a whole-wheat English muffin (grains).

The two options for crediting MMA at breakfast also apply to combination foods. For more information, refer to “[MMA Substitutions](#)” in this section.

### Crediting combination foods containing one grain item and one MMA item

Table 3-31 and 3-32 show how SFAs could use each MMA substitutions option to credit a breakfast burrito (combination food) that contains 1 oz eq of grains and 1 oz eq of MMA.

- **Using option 1:** Table 3-31 shows OVS examples when the SFA chooses to credit the scrambled egg in the breakfast burrito as a grain substitution (option 1). For this example, the burrito credits as two grains (one grain and one MMA as a grain substitution) and the menu offers five food items.
- **Using option 2:** Table 3-32 shows OVS examples when the SFA chooses to credit the scrambled egg in the breakfast burrito as an extra food that does not credit toward the grains component (option 2). For this example, the burrito credits as one grain and the menu offers four food items.



**Table 3-31. Offering a 2-oz eq combination food as two grain items in a menu with four food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Breakfast burrito with scrambled egg (½ egg) in whole-corn tortilla shell (1 ounce)		G, 1 oz eq (MMA substitution) G, 1 oz eq	2 G
Garden salsa, ½ cup		F, ½ cup (V substitution) <sup>1</sup>	1 F
Cantaloupe wedges, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Garden salsa (1 F) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 F including V substitution, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G including 1 MMA substitution), 1 M, 1 F.
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Garden salsa (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F from V substitution, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F and 2 G including 1 MMA substitution).

Table 3-31, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Breakfast burrito (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 M, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Garden salsa (1 F) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 M, 2 F including 1 V substitution).

<sup>1</sup> Vegetable substitutions credit as the fruits component (refer to “[Vegetable Substitutions](#)” in this section).



**Table 3-32. Offering a 2-oz eq combination food as one grain item in a menu with four food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Breakfast burrito with scrambled egg (½ egg) in whole-corn tortilla shell (1 ounce)		None (extra food) <sup>1</sup> G, 1 oz eq	0 1 G
Garden salsa, ½ cup		F, ½ cup (V substitution) <sup>2</sup>	1 F
Cantaloupe wedges, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Breakfast burrito (1 G) Garden salsa (1 F) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F including V substitution, 1 G).
Breakfast burrito (1 G) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Breakfast burrito (1 G) Garden salsa (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F from V substitution).
Breakfast burrito (1 G) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F).

Table 3-32, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Breakfast burrito (1 G) Milk (1 M)	2	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F) and is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Breakfast burrito (1 G) Milk (1 M)	2	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F) and is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Garden salsa (1 F) Cantaloupe wedges (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 M, 2 F including 1 V substitution).
<sup>1</sup> MMA planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS. <sup>2</sup> Vegetable substitutions credit as the fruits component (refer to “ <a href="#">Vegetable Substitutions</a> ” in this section).			

### Crediting combination foods containing two grain items and one MMA item

Tables 3-33 and 34 show how SFAs could use the MMA substitutions options to credit a breakfast sandwich (combination food) that contains 2 oz eq of grains and 1 oz eq of MMA substitution.

- **Using option 1:** Table 3-33 shows OVS examples when the SFA chooses to credit the egg in the breakfast sandwich as a grain substitution (option 1). For this example, the breakfast sandwich credits as three grains (two grains and one MMA as a grain substitution) and the menu offers six food items.
- **Using option 2:** Table 3-34 shows OVS examples when the SFA chooses to credit the egg in the breakfast sandwich as an extra food that does not credit toward the grains component

(option 2). For this example, the breakfast sandwich credits as two grains and the menu offers five food items.

**Table 3-33. Offering a 3-oz eq combination food as three grain items in a menu with six food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Egg sandwich ( $\frac{1}{2}$ egg) with ham and cheese ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce total) on whole-wheat English muffin (2 ounces)		G, $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq (MMA substitution) <sup>1</sup> G, 2 oz eq	3 G
Green grapes, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		F, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 F
Apple juice, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup		F, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Egg sandwich (3 G) Green grapes (1 F) Milk (1 M)	5	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains five food items (1 F, 1 M, 3 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Egg sandwich (3 G) Milk (1 M)	4	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 M, 3 G including 1 MMA substitution) but is missing at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of F.
Egg sandwich (3 G) Green grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 3 G including 1 MMA substitution).



Table 3-33, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Egg sandwich (3 G) Green grapes (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 3 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Egg sandwich (3 G) Apple juice (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 3 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Green grapes (1 F) Apple juice (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).
<sup>1</sup> When crediting grains (and MMA substitutions) as food items for OVS, SFAs must round down the total amount of oz eq to the nearest whole number of oz eq (refer to “ <a href="#">Multiple Servings of Grains</a> ” and “ <a href="#">Crediting Grains for OVS versus the SBP Meal Pattern</a> ” in this section).			

**Table 3-34. Offering a 3-oz eq combination food as three grain items in a menu with five food items**

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
Egg sandwich (½ egg) with		None (extra food) <sup>1</sup>	0
ham and cheese (½ ounce total) on		None (extra food) <sup>1</sup>	0
whole-wheat English muffin (2 ounces)		G, 2 oz eq	2 G
Green grapes, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Apple juice, ½ cup		F, ½ cup	1 F
Choice of unflavored low-fat or unflavored/flavored fat-free milk, 1 cup		M, 1 cup	1 M
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Egg sandwich (2 G) Green grapes (1 F) Milk (1 M)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (2 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Egg sandwich (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Egg sandwich (2 G) Green grapes (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 F).
Egg sandwich (2 G) Apple juice (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 2 G).
Green grapes (1 F) Apple juice (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).
<sup>1</sup> MMA planned as extra foods do not credit as food items for OVS.			

## Menu Planning Tips for OVS at Breakfast

SFAs decide how to offer the food components for OVS at breakfast. These menu-planning decisions determine the choices that students may select for reimbursable meals. SFAs can increase the likelihood that students will select reimbursable meals by using strategies that encourage students to take at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full serving (minimum daily amount) of at least two food items.

The following guidelines help simplify the menu planning process and make it easier for students to select (and school food service staff to identify) reimbursable breakfasts with OVS.

- **Consistent crediting:** Be consistent with the crediting of food items. For example, the USDA allows SFAs to decide whether to credit MMA substitutions as grain items or extra items. Choose one option and credit foods the same way for all menus. For more information, refer to “[MMA Substitutions](#)” in this section.
- **Offer all fruits and vegetables in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings:** Offer a variety of fruits (and optional vegetable substitutions) in  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings for all grades. Allow students to select at least two servings (1 cup total) to meet the minimum daily requirement for the fruits component. This makes it easier for students to meet the OVS requirement for at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits or vegetables. Provide clear information on menus and signage instructing students on the amount of fruit they can select.
- **Plan fruit and vegetable choices to meet weekly juice limit:** Review breakfast menus for compliance with the weekly juice limit. Provide clear information on lunch menus and cafeteria signage that instructs students on the amount of juice they can select with each breakfast. For more information, refer to “[Assorted Juice Choice at Breakfast](#)” in this section. **Note:** For best nutrition, serve more fruit than juice. Juice is more calorie dense than whole fruits and vegetables and does not provide the same nutritional benefits.
- **Offer the full serving of all grain choices:** Offer all grains in at least 1 oz eq so any choice credits as at least one food item for OVS. For example, offer a 1-oz eq muffin (one food item) instead of two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz eq muffins (one food item). For more information, refer to “[Offering 1 Oz Eq of Grains as Two Separate Foods](#)” in this section.

- **Offer breakfast choices that provide at least two food items:** Students who select a choice with two food items (such as two grains from a 2-oz eq whole-grain bagel) only need  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruits (or optional vegetable substitutions) for a reimbursable breakfast. Another example is a yogurt parfait that includes three food items from  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of whole-grain granola (one grain), 4 ounces of low-fat yogurt (one grain from MMA substitution), and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of sliced fresh fruit (one fruit). Students who select the yogurt parfait have a reimbursable breakfast. For more information, refer to “[Crediting Grains as One or More Food Items](#)” in this section.
- **Provide clear signage:** Check that breakfast menus and cafeteria signage clearly communicate all menu choices and what students must select for reimbursable breakfasts. Schools must have signage located on the serving line near each food component that informs students of the menu choices. A helpful strategy for determining if signage is sufficient and effective is to conduct a cafeteria walk-through from beginning of the serving line to the POS. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1.
- **Provide staff training:** Provide regular OVS training to help school food service staff understand and identify the required S meal pattern components, how food items credit for each meal choice on the lunch menu, and what constitutes a reimbursable meal at the POS. For more information, refer to “[Food service staff training](#)” in section 1.

For more information on menu planning for breakfast, refer to sections 3 and 4 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and the CSDE’s resource, *Menu Planning for the School Breakfast Program*.



## Sample Breakfast Menus

The menu and cafeteria signage must clearly communicate how many food items students may select daily from each component for a reimbursable breakfast, based on the planned daily breakfast menu for each grade group. Signage must be located at the beginning of the serving line and near each food component to indicate what and how much students can take for a reimbursable meal. For more information, refer to “[Meal Identification Signage](#)” in section 1.

Sample breakfast menus 1 through 3 show how SFAs could communicate the OVS requirements to students. To demonstrate how menu planning choices affect OVS, each sample menu:

- includes at least four food items;
- offers the same food items but changes the amounts that students may select from each component;
- includes choices within each component; and
- offers each component in at least the full serving (minimum daily amount) of the grains component and at least the full serving required by the SBP meal pattern.

Each sample breakfast menu could be served to any grade group. However, SFAs must be careful to meet the more restrictive sodium and calorie requirements when using one breakfast menu for grades K-12. For information on planning menus to meet the dietary specifications, refer to section 6 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

**Note:** These sample breakfast menus meet the daily SBP meal pattern requirements for the purpose of illustrating the OVS requirements. However, the SBP meal pattern also requires weekly minimums for the grains component. To meet this requirement, weekly breakfast menus must include additional servings of grains on some days over the week. For more information, refer to [table 3-15](#) in this section, and section 4 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).



### Sample breakfast menu 1

Table 3-35 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily breakfast menu that allows students to select four food items including:

- one food item from the grains component (1 oz eq);
- two food items (½ cup each) from the fruits component (1 cup total); and
- one food item from the milk component (1 cup).

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all four food items but must select at least three food items, including ½ cup of fruit and two other food items. Students may select duplicate food items from the fruits component such as two servings of the same fruit (except for juice), or two different fruits, because the planned menu allows any two choices (food items) from the fruits component. For more information, refer to “[Duplicate Fruit Selections at Breakfast](#)” in this section.

**Table 3-35. Sample breakfast menu 1**

Table 3-35. Sample breakfast menu 1		
Choose <b>at least three</b> of the four food items, including at least one fruit. For best nutrition, choose all four!		
Milk	Fruits	Grains
Choose one	Choose up to two	Choose one
Low-fat milk Fat-free milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk	<i>Choose two fruits OR one fruit and one juice</i> Fresh cut-up fruit Canned fruit <sup>1</sup> Whole fruit Dried fruit 100 percent fruit juice <sup>1</sup>	Whole-grain cereals, assorted Oatmeal Whole-grain toast Whole-grain muffins Whole-grain mini bagel Whole-grain mini pancakes
<sup>1</sup> SFAs must count all sources of 100 percent juice toward the weekly juice limit, including juice in canned fruit, unless the fruit is drained. If canned fruit is not drained, students cannot select juice and canned fruit because this exceeds the weekly juice limit. Since this menu offers 5 cups of fruit per week (1 cup per day), schools cannot offer and students cannot select more than ½ cup of juice per day (refer to “ <a href="#">Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast</a> ” in this section).		

Table 3-36 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample breakfast menu 1.

Table 3-36. OVS examples for sample breakfast menu 1			
Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk	M, 1 cup	1 M
<b>Fruit</b> <i>Choose two fruits or one fruit and one juice</i>	Fresh cut-up fruit choices, ½ cup Whole fruit choices, ½ cup Canned fruit choices, ½ cup Dried fruit, ¼ cup <sup>1</sup> 100 percent fruit juice, assorted, ½ cup	F, 1 cup	2 F
<b>Grains</b> <sup>2</sup> <i>Choose one</i> <sup>3</sup>	Whole-grain cereal (1 cup flakes or rounds, 1¼ cups puffed and ½ cup granola) Oatmeal, ½ cup cooked Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce Whole-grain muffins, 2 ounces Whole-grain corn muffin, 1.2 ounces Whole-grain mini bagel, 1 ounce Whole-grain pancakes, 1.2 ounces	G, 1 oz eq	1 G
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Oatmeal (1 G) Corn muffin (1 G) Canned fruit (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F). The second G does not count as a food item for OVS because the planned menu allows only one G choice. <sup>2</sup>



Table 3-36, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Muffin (1 G) Whole fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (G, 1 F, 1 M).
Toast, 2 slices (2 G) Fruit juice (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G, 1 F). The second G does not count as a food item for OVS because the planned menu allows only one G choice. <sup>2</sup>
Bagel (1 G) Fresh cut-up fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Fruit juice (1 F) Canned fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 F, 1 M).

<sup>1</sup> Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit credits as ½ cup of the fruits component.

<sup>2</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)).

<sup>3</sup> The SFA decides the number of food items that students may select from each component. Since this planned menu allows only one grain choice, an additional grain selection cannot credit as a food item for OVS (refer to “[Multiple Servings of Grains](#)” and “[Crediting Grains for OVS versus the SBP Meal Pattern](#)” in this section).

### Sample breakfast menu 2

Table 3-37 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily breakfast menu that allows students to select five food items including:

- one food item from the grains component (1 oz eq);
- one food item from the MMA component as a grain substitution (1 oz eq);
- two food items ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup each) from the fruits component (1 cup total); and
- one food item from the milk component (1 cup).

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all five food items but must select at least three food items, including  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit and two other food items. Students may select duplicate food items from the fruits component (such as two servings of the same fruit, except for juice), or two different fruits, because the planned menu allows any two choices (food items) from the fruits component. Students cannot select duplicate food items from the grains component, such as two bagels or two yogurts (MMA substitutions), because the planned menu allows only one choice (food item) from each component. For more information, refer to [“Duplicate Fruit Selections at Breakfast”](#) and [“Duplicate Grain Selections at Breakfast”](#) in this section.



Table 3-37. Sample breakfast menu 2

Choose **at least three** of the five food items including at least one fruit.  
For best nutrition, choose all five!

Milk	Fruits	Grains	Meat/meat alternates
Choose one	Choose up to two	Choose one	Choose one
Low-fat milk Fat-free milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk	<i>Choose two fruits OR one fruit and one juice</i> Fresh cut-up fruit Canned fruit <sup>1</sup> Whole fruit Dried fruit 100 percent fruit juice <sup>1</sup>	Whole-grain cereals, assorted Oatmeal Whole-grain toast Whole-grain muffins Whole-grain mini bagel Whole-grain mini pancakes	Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors Peanut butter Low-fat cheese stick

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must count all sources of 100 percent juice toward the weekly juice limit, including juice in canned fruit, unless the fruit is drained. If canned fruit is not drained, students cannot select juice and canned fruit because this exceeds the weekly juice limit. Since this menu offers 5 cups of fruit per week (1 cup per day), schools cannot offer and students cannot select more than ½ cup of juice per day. For more information, refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast](#)” in this section.

Table 3-38 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample breakfast menu 2.

Table 3-38. OVS examples for sample breakfast menu 2

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk	M, 1 cup	1 M
<b>Fruit</b> <i>Choose two fruits or one fruit and one juice</i>	Fresh cut-up fruit choices, ½ cup Whole fruit choices, ½ cup Canned fruit choices, ½ cup Dried fruit, ¼ cup (credits as ½ cup) <sup>1</sup> 100 percent fruit juice, assorted, ½ cup	F, 1 cup	2 F
<b>Grains</b> <sup>2</sup> <i>Choose one</i> <sup>3</sup>	Whole-grain cereal (1 cup flakes or rounds, 1¼ cups puffed and ½ cup granola) Oatmeal, ½ cup cooked Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce Whole-grain muffins, 2 ounces Whole-grain corn muffin, 1.2 ounces Whole-grain mini bagel, 1 ounce Whole-grain pancakes, 1.2 ounces	G, 1 oz eq	1 G
<b>MMA</b> <i>Choose one</i> <sup>3</sup>	Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors, ½ cup Low-fat cheese stick, 1 ounce Peanut butter, 2 tablespoons	G, 1 oz eq (MMA substitution)	1 G
Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).			
Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be "Yes"</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Bagel (1 G) Cheese stick (1 G) Milk (1 M) Fresh fruit (1 F)	4	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains four food items (1 F, 1 M, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution).
Muffin (1 G) Canned fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).

Table 3-38, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Waffles (1 G) Yogurt (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 M, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution) but is missing at least ½ cup of F.
Fruit juice (1 F) Yogurt (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 1 M, 1 G from MMA substitution).
Yogurt, two servings (2 G) Canned fruit (1 F)	2	Yes	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G from MMA substitution, 1 F). The second yogurt does not count as a food item for OVS because the planned menu allows only one MMA choice. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit credits as ½ cup of the fruits component.

<sup>2</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#) and [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#)).

<sup>3</sup> The SFA decides the number of food items that students may select from each component. Since this planned menu allows only one grain choice and one MMA choice, an additional grain or MMA selection cannot credit as a food item for OVS. For more information, refer to “[Multiple Servings of Grains](#)” and “[Crediting Grains for OVS versus the SBP Meal Pattern](#)” in this section.

### Sample Breakfast Menu 3

Table 3-39 shows an example of cafeteria signage for a daily breakfast menu that allows students to select five items including:

- two food items (each containing 1 oz eq) from the grains and MMA components combined, including MMA as grains substitutions (2 oz eq total);
- two food items ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup each) from the fruits component (1 cup total); and
- one food item from the milk component (1 cup).

This menu clearly communicates that students may select all five food items but must select at least three food items, including  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit and two other food items. Students may select duplicate food items from the fruits component, such as two servings of the same fruit (except for juice) or two different fruits, because the planned menu allows any two choices (food items) from the fruits component. Students may also select duplicate food items from the grains and MMA component (such as two bagels or two cheese sticks) because the planned menu allows any two choices (two food items). For more information, refer to “[Duplicate Grain Selections](#)” in this section.



Table 3-39. Sample breakfast menu 3

Choose **at least three** of the five food items, including at least one fruit.  
For best nutrition, choose all five!

Milk	Fruits	Grains and meat/meat alternates	
Choose one	Choose up to two	Choose up to two	
Low-fat milk Fat-free milk Fat-free chocolate milk Fat-free strawberry milk	<i>Choose two fruits OR one fruit and one juice</i> Fresh cut-up fruit Canned fruit <sup>1</sup> Whole fruit Dried fruit 100 percent fruit juice <sup>1</sup>	Whole-grain cereals, assorted Oatmeal Whole-grain toast Whole-grain muffins, assorted Whole-grain mini bagel Whole-grain mini pancakes	Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors Peanut butter Low-fat cheese stick

<sup>1</sup> SFAs must count all sources of 100 percent juice toward the weekly juice limit, including juice in canned fruit, unless the fruit is drained. If canned fruit is not drained, students cannot select juice and canned fruit because this exceeds the weekly juice limit. Since this menu offers 5 cups of fruit per week (1 cup per day), schools cannot offer and students cannot select more than ½ cup of juice per day. For more information, refer to “[Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast](#)” in this section.


Table 3-40 shows OVS examples with student selections for sample breakfast menu 4.



Table 3-40. OVS examples for sample breakfast menu 3

Planned breakfast menu		Meal pattern components	Food items
<b>Milk</b> <i>Choose one</i>	Unflavored low-fat milk Unflavored fat-free milk Flavored fat-free milk	M, 1 cup	1 M
<b>Fruit</b> <i>Choose two fruits or one fruit and one juice<sup>1</sup></i>	Fresh cut-up fruit choices, ½ cup Whole fruit choices, ½ cup Canned fruit choices, ½ cup Dried fruit, ¼ cup <sup>2</sup> 100 percent fruit juice, assorted, ½ cup	F, 1 cup	2 F
<b>Grains<sup>3</sup> and MMA</b> <i>Choose one or two<sup>4</sup></i>	Whole-grain cereal (1 cup flakes or rounds, 1¼ cups puffed and ¼ cup granola) Oatmeal, ½ cup cooked Whole-grain toast, 1 ounce Whole-grain muffins, 2 ounces Whole-grain corn muffin, 1.2 ounces Whole-grain mini bagel, 1 ounce Whole-grain pancakes, 1.2 ounces Low-fat yogurt, assorted flavors, ½ cup <sup>5</sup> Low-fat cheese stick, 1 ounce <sup>5</sup> Peanut butter, 2 tablespoons <sup>5</sup>	G, 2 oz eq	2 G
<b>Students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitution, if offered).</b>			
<b>Student selects</b>	<b>Food items</b> <i>Must be at least 3</i>	<b>Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution)</b> <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	<b>Reimbursable meal?</b>
Yogurt, two servings (2 G) Canned fruit (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G from MMA substitutions, 1 F).
Oatmeal (1 G) Whole fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).

Table 3-40, *continued*

Student selects	Food items <i>Must be at least 3</i>	Do the 3 food items include at least ½ cup of F (or V substitution) <i>Must be “Yes”</i>	Reimbursable meal?
Cheese sticks, two (2 G) Fresh cut-up fruit (1 F)	3	Yes	<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G from MMA substitutions, 1 F).
Cereal, two servings (2 G) Milk (1 M)	3	No	<b>No.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (2 G, 1 M) but is missing at least ½ cup of fruit.
Muffin (1 G) Whole fruit (1 F) Milk (1 M)			<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 G, 1 F, 1 M).
Bagel (1 G) Peanut butter (1 G) Juice (1 F)			<b>Yes.</b> The selected meal contains three food items (1 F, 2 G including 1 MMA substitution).
<p><sup>1</sup> If the ½-cup serving of canned fruit is substituted with juice, this meal is not reimbursable because this exceeds the weekly juice limit. For more information, refer to “<a href="#">Weekly Juice Limit at Breakfast</a>” in this section.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> SFAs must document that the serving provides the required oz eq or minimum creditable grains (refer to the CSDE’s resources, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a> and <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>).</p> <p><sup>4</sup> The SFA decides the number of food items that students may select from each component. Since this planned menu allows any two grain or MMA choices, students may select any two choices (same or different) to credit as two food items for OVS (refer to “<a href="#">Multiple Servings of Grains</a>” and “<a href="#">Crediting Grains for OVS versus the SBP Meal Pattern</a>”) in this section.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> MMA planned as a grain substitution.</p>			

## 4 — Resources

This section includes links to resources and websites that assist SFAs with meeting the NSLP and SBP meal pattern, crediting, and OVS requirements for grades K-12. Topics include CSDE guides and resource lists, crediting and meal pattern resources, menu planning guidance, regulations and policy, and related websites.

More links to information on the federal and state requirements and guidance for school meals are available on the CSDE's [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages. For a list of resources on the NSLP and SBP meal patterns and crediting requirements for grades K-12, refer to the CSDE's resource, *[Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#)*.

### Comparison Charts

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CNPMealPatternComparison.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ComparisonPreschoolGradesK-12SNP.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPComparisonPreschoolK12.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonGrainCreditingSNP.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonMilkRequirementsSNP.pdf>

## Crediting Requirements and Documentation

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/AcceptDocumentationSNP.pdf>

Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products (USDA):

[https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer\\_checklist.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf)

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CNlabel.pdf>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels (CSDE's Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#CNlabels>

Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting\\_Summary\\_Charts\\_SNP\\_Grades\\_K-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Grades_K-12.pdf)

Crediting Updates for Child Nutrition Programs: Be in the Know! Webinar Series (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/crediting-updates-child-nutrition-programs-be-know-webinar-series>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs: Training Resources (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-training-resources>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/NoncreditableFoodsSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Product Formulation Statements (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/PFS.pdf>

Product Formulation Statements (CSDE's Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#PFS>

## 4 | Resources

Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool>

Standardized Recipes (“Related Resources” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#StandardizedRecipes>

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 11-2015 (v2), CACFP 10-2015 and SFSP 13-2015: CN Labels Copied with a Watermark:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn-labels-copied-watermark-acceptable-documentation>

USDA Memo SP 26-2019, CACFP 13-2019 and SFSP 12-2019: Crediting Pasta Products Made of Vegetable Flour in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/crediting-pasta-products-made-vegetable-flour-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo TA 07-2010 (v.3): Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements:

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/TA07-2010v3os.pdf>

Yield Study Form for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/YieldStudy.pdf>

### CSDE Guides

Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/SpecialDietsGuide.pdf>

Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SWP/Action\\_Guide.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SWP/Action_Guide.pdf)

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPHandbook.pdf>

Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideHFC.pdf>

Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideNonHFC.pdf>

Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsPrivateRCCI.pdf>

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/mpgpreschool.pdf>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/OVSGuide.pdf>

Smarter Lunchrooms Action Guide (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SmarterLunch/SLAG.pdf>

## CSDE Resource Lists

Resource List for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesChildNutritionPrograms.pdf>

Resource List for Competitive Foods (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesCompetitiveFoods.pdf>

Resource List for Dietary Guidelines and Nutrition Information (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesDietaryGuidelines.pdf>

Resource List for Food Safety (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesFoodSafety.pdf>

Resource List for Health and Achievement (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesAchievement.pdf>

Resource List for Menu Planning and Food Production in Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesMenuPlanning.pdf>

Resource List for Nutrition Education (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesNutritionEducation.pdf>

Resource List for Physical Activity and Physical Education (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesPhysicalActivity.pdf>

Resource List for Promoting Healthy Weight (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesHealthyWeight.pdf>

Resource List for Special Diets (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesSpecialDiets.pdf>

Resource List for Wellness Policies for Schools and Child Care (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesWellnessPolicy.pdf>

Resources for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Resources-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/ResourcesSchoolMealPatterns\\_gradesK-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/ResourcesSchoolMealPatterns_gradesK-12.pdf)

### Fruits Component

Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditJuiceSNP.pdf>

Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditSmoothiesSNP.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 07-19: Compliance Issues with the Vegetables and Fruits Components for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM07-19.pdf>

Fruits Component for Grades K-12 (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Fruits>

USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-coconut-hominy-corn-masa-and-masa-harina-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/smoothies-offered-child-nutrition-programs>



## Grains Component

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainCalculationSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonGrainCrediting.pdf>

Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditCerealsSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditEnrichedGrainsSNP.pdf>

Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditWholeGrainsSNP.pdf>

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>

Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs):

<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/ExhibitATool/Index>

Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainOzEqSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Grains Component for Grades K-12 ("Documents/Forms" section of CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Grains>

Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGRRequirementSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 23-2019, CACFP 10-2019 and SFSP 09-2019: Crediting Popcorn in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/crediting-popcorn-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/grain-requirements-national-school-lunch-program-and-school-breakfast-program>

USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-coconut-hominy-corn-masa-and-masa-harina-child-nutrition-programs>

Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/whole-grain-resource-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs-0>

### Meal Patterns and Menu Planning

Breakfast Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#BreakfastMealPatterns>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CNPMealPatternComparison.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ComparisonPreschoolGradesK-12SNP.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonGrainCrediting.pdf>

Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards for School Meals) (CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Program webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#DietarySpecifications>

Lunch Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#LunchMealPatterns>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (“Documents/Forms” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents>

Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12 (CSDE’s Forms for School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Forms-for-School-Nutrition-Programs#MenuPlanningChecklistsLunchGradesK-12>

Menu Planning for School Meals (“Related Resources” section of CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources#MenuPlanningSchoolMeals>

Nutrition Standards for School Meals (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/nutrition-standards-school-meals>

Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/OverviewMenuPlanningNSLP\\_gradesK-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/OverviewMenuPlanningNSLP_gradesK-12.pdf)

Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the SBP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SBP/OverviewMenuPlanningSBP\\_gradesK-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SBP/OverviewMenuPlanningSBP_gradesK-12.pdf)

Production Records for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Production-Records-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Requirements for Production Records in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/ProdRecord/ProductionRecords.pdf>

Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/ResourcesSchoolMealPatterns\\_gradesK-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/ResourcesSchoolMealPatterns_gradesK-12.pdf)

## Meat/Meat Alternates Component

Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products (USDA):

[https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer\\_checklist.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf)

Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditCommercialMMASNP.pdf>

Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP: Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditDeliSNP.pdf>

Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditLegumesSNP.pdf>

Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditNutsSNP.pdf>

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditTofuSNP.pdf>

Crediting Yogurt for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditYogurtSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#MMA>

Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products (APP) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/questions-and-answers-alternate-protein-products-app>

Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/APPRequirementsSNP.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 21-2019, CACFP 08-2019 and SFSP 07-2019: Crediting Shelf-Stable, Dried and Semi-Dried Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Products in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/crediting-shelf-stable-dried-and-semi-dried-meat-poultry-and-seafood-products-child-nutrition>

USDA Memo SP 24-2019, CACFP 11-2019 and SFSP 10-2019: Crediting Surimi Seafood in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/crediting-surimi-seafood-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 25-2019, CACFP 12-2019 and SFSP 11-2019: Crediting Tempeh in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-tempeh-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 26-2019, CACFP 13-2019 and SFSP 12-2019: Crediting Pasta Products Made of Vegetable Flour in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-pasta-products-made-vegetable-flour-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 53-2016 and CACFP 21-2016: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meal Programs and the CACFP:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/crediting-tofu-and-soy-yogurt-products-school-meal-programs-and-cacfp>

## Milk Component

Allowable Milk Substitutions for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/MilkSubstitutesSNP.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonMilkRequirementsSNP.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 06-19: Summary of Federal and State Milk Requirements for the NSLP, SBP, SSO of the NSLP, ASP of the NSLP, and Special Milk Program (SMP):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM07-19.pdf>

Milk Component for Grades K-12 (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Milk>

USDA Memo SP 07-2010, CACFP 04-2010 and SFSP 05-2010: Questions and Answers: Fluid Milk Substitutions:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-milk-substitution-children-medical-or-special-dietary-needs-non-disability>

USDA Memo SP 39-2019: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/clarification-milk-and-water-requirements-school-meal-program>

### Vegetables Component

Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditJuiceSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditLegumesSNP.pdf>

Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditSmoothiesSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Crediting Soups in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditSoupSNP.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 07-19: Compliance Issues with the Vegetables and Fruits Components for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM07-19.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 26-2019, CACFP 13-2019 and SFSP 12-2019: Crediting Pasta Products Made of Vegetable Flour in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/crediting-pasta-products-made-vegetable-flour-child-nutrition-programs>

Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/VegSubgroup.pdf>

Vegetables Component for Grades K-12 (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Vegetables>

### Regulations and Policy

C.G.S. Section 10-221o. Lunch Periods and Recess:

[https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_170.htm#sec\\_10-221o](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_170.htm#sec_10-221o)

C.G.S. Section 10-221q. Sale of beverages:

[https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_170.htm#sec\\_10-221q](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_170.htm#sec_10-221q)

Child Nutrition Programs Legislation & Regulations (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/program-legislation-regulations>

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the National School Lunch Program (7 CFR 210) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-210—national-school-lunch-program>

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR 220) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-220—school-breakfast-program>

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the Special Milk Program (7 CFR 215) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-215—special-milk-program-children>

Comparison of Programs: SFSP/NSLP/Seamless Summer Option (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/comparison-programs-sfspnslpseamless-option>

CSDE Circular Letter C-9: Federal and State Requirements for Provision and Timeframe of Daily Lunch Period for Students:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Circular-Letters/circ07-08/C9.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 10-19: Requirements for Lunch Periods in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM10-19.pdf>

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Laws-and-Regulations-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Regulations for the NSLP (7 CFR 210):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-210%E2%80%94national-school-lunch-program>

Regulations for the SBP (7 CFR 220):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-220%E2%80%94school-breakfast-program>

USDA Final Rule (77 FR 4088): Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 17-2012: Procurement Questions and Answers to Assist in the Implementation of the final rule titled Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/procurement-qas-assist-implementation-final-rule-titled-nutrition-standards-nslp-and-sbp>



### Websites

An Opportunity for Schools: Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/opportunity-schools>

Beverage Requirements (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Beverage-Requirements>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling-program>

Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Child Nutrition Sharing Site (ICN):

<https://theicn.org/cnss/>

Connecticut Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Documents & Resources (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/resources>

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Instructions (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/FNS-Instructions-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Food Buying Guide for Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/FNS-Instructions-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Laws-and-Regulations-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Manuals and Guides for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Manuals-and-Guides-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Meal Pattern Training Materials for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning>

National School Lunch Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/National-School-Lunch-Program>

National School Lunch Program (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp>

Nutrition Standards for School Meals (USDA):

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/legislation/nutritionstandards.htm>

Offer versus Serve for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Offer-versus-Serve-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Operating-Child-Nutrition-Programs-during-COVID-19-Outbreaks>

Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Operational-Memoranda-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Procurement for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Procurement-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Production Records for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Production-Records-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Resources for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE): <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Resources-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/School-Breakfast-Program>

School Breakfast Program (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/school-breakfast-program-sbp>

Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Seamless-Summer-Option-SSO-of-the-NSLP>

Smarter Lunchrooms (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Smarter-Lunchrooms>

Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Team Nutrition (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn>

Training for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Training-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Water Availability (CSDE's Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs#WaterAvailability>

### USDA Regulations and Policy

Comparison of Programs SFSP/NSLP/Seamless Summer Option (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/comparison-programs-sfspnslpseamless-option>

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

National School Lunch Program Regulations (7 CFR 210) (USDA): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-210—national-school-lunch-program>

School Breakfast Program Regulations (7 CFR 220) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/part-220—school-breakfast-program>

USDA Memo SP 10-2012 (v9): Questions and Answers on the Final Rule, “Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs”: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-final-rule-nutrition-standards-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs>

USDA Memo SP 35-2011 and CACFP 23-2011: Clarification on the Use of Offer versus Serve and Family Style Meal Service:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/clarification-use-offer-vs-serve-and-family-style-meal-service>

USDA Memo SP 41-2015: Offer versus Serve: Guidance for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program SBP (School Year 2015-16):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/updated-offer-vs-serve-guidance-nslp-and-sbp-beginning-sy2015-16>

USDA Memo SP 41-2019: Salad Bars in the National School Lunch Program.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/salad-bars-national-school-lunch-program-and-school-breakfast-program>

USDA Memo SP 57-2014: Updated Offer versus Serve Guidance for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program in School Year 2014-2015:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/updated-offer-versus-serve-guidance-national-school-lunch-program-and-school-breakfast-program>



## Glossary

**a la carte sales:** Foods and beverages that are sold separately from reimbursable meals in the USDA school nutrition programs. For more information, refer to “competitive foods” in this section.

**Afterschool Snack Program (ASP):** The USDA’s federally assisted snack program implemented through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The ASP provides cash reimbursement to help schools serve snacks to children in afterschool activities aimed at promoting the health and well-being of children and youth. Schools must provide children with regularly scheduled activities in an organized, structured, and supervised environment that includes educational or enrichment activities, e.g., mentoring/tutoring programs. Programs must meet state or local licensing requirements and health and safety standards. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Afterschool Snack Program](#) webpage.

**age/grade groups:** The three grade groupings (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) of the USDA meal patterns for breakfast and lunch. The classification of grade groups is based on the nutritional needs of children and the ages that typically correspond with these grade levels (ages 5-10 for grades K-5, ages 11-13 for grades 6-8, and ages 14-18 for grades 9-12).

**alternate protein products (APP):** APPs are generally single ingredient powders that are added to foods. Some examples include soy flours, soy concentrates, soy isolates, whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolates, and casein. APPs include vegetable protein products. The USDA has specific requirements for the crediting of APP in Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products](#), and the USDA’s resource, [Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products](#).

**bran:** The seed husk or outer coating of cereal grains such as wheat, rye, and oats. Examples include oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran. Bran is not a whole grain and does not credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Bran counts toward the limit for noncreditable grains. For information on noncreditable grains, refer to the CSDE’s guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

**cereal grains:** The seeds that come from grasses. Cereal grains can be whole grain (such as amaranth, barley, buckwheat, corn, millet, oats, quinoa, rice, rolled wheat, rye, sorghum, triticale, wheat, and wheat berries) or enriched, such as cornmeal, corn grits, and farina.

**Child Nutrition (CN) label:** A statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a food product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. Products eligible for CN labeling include main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the meal pattern requirements, e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions. The CN label will also indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), and visit the USDA’s [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling](#) webpage.

**Child Nutrition Programs:** The USDA’s federally funded programs that provide nutritious meals and snacks to children, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP also provides nutritious meals and snacks to the frail elderly in adult day care centers. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

**combination foods:** Foods that contain more than one food component, such as pizza, burritos, and smoothies made with milk and fruit. For example, macaroni and cheese contains pasta (grains) and cheese (meat/meat alternate). Combination foods generally cannot be separated (such as pizza and burritos) or are not intended to be separated (such as a hamburger on a bun or turkey sandwich).

**creditable food:** A food or beverage that counts toward meeting the meal pattern requirements for reimbursable meals and ASP snacks in the USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

**Dietary Guidelines for Americans:** A federal document that provides science-based advice for Americans ages 2 and older to promote health and reduce risk for chronic diseases through diet and physical activity. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture jointly publish the *Dietary Guidelines* every five years. This document forms the basis of federal food, nutrition education, and information programs. For more information, visit the [Dietary Guidelines](#) webpage.

**dietary specifications:** The USDA’s nutrition standards for meals in the NSLP and SBP. The dietary specifications include weekly calorie ranges, and limits for saturated fats and sodium. In addition, Nutrition Facts labels and manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fats per serving for all food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals. For information, refer to section 5 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

## Glossary

**edible portion:** The portion of a food that can actually be eaten after the nonedible parts are removed, for example, cooked, lean meat without bone, and fruit without seeds or pits.

**endosperm:** The soft, white inside portion of the whole-grain kernel. The endosperm contains starch, protein, and small amounts of B vitamins.

**enriched grains:** Refined grains (such as wheat, rice, and corn) and grain products (such as cereal, pasta, and bread) that have some vitamins and minerals added to replace the nutrients lost during processing. The five enrichment nutrients are added within limits specified by the FDA, and include thiamin (B<sub>1</sub>), riboflavin (B<sub>2</sub>), niacin (B<sub>3</sub>), folic acid, and iron. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP](#).

**enrichment:** Adding back nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) originally present in a food that were lost during processing. Enrichment nutrients are added back in approximately the same levels as were originally present in the food. For more information, refer to “enriched grains” in this section.

**entree:** Refer to “main dish” in this section.

**Exhibit A chart:** A USDA chart that indicates the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) for a grain food to provide 1 ounce equivalent (NSLP and SBP) or 1 serving (ASP) of the grains component. This chart may be used for commercial grain products and for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. The required amounts for the grains component are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs. The CSDE's resource, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#), lists the Exhibit A grain ounce equivalents that apply to grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. For more information, refer to the USDA's [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#).

**extra foods:** Refer to “noncreditable foods” in this section.

**fluid milk substitutes:** Nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) that can be used as a substitute for fluid milk in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. For reimbursable meals and ASP snacks, nondairy beverages served to children without disabilities must comply with the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes. For more information, refer the CSDE's resource, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs](#).

**food components:** The five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals in the NSLP (milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains) and the three food groups that comprise reimbursable breakfasts in the SBP (grains with optional meat/meat alternate substitutions, fruits with optional vegetable substitutions, and milk). For more information on the individual food components, refer to the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



**food item:** A specific food offered within the food components that comprise reimbursable meals in the USDA school nutrition programs. A food item may contain one or more food components or more than one serving of a single component. For example, an entree could provide 1 oz eq of the grains component and 1 oz eq of the meat/meat alternates component, and a 2 ounce whole grain or enriched bagel could provide 2 oz eq of the grains component.

**fortification:** Adding nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) that were not originally present in a food or beverage, or adding nutrients at levels that are higher than originally present. Fortification is used for naturally nutrient-rich products based on scientifically documented health needs (such as fortifying milk with vitamin D to increase the body’s absorption of calcium), or to enhance the perceived nutritional value of products with little or no natural nutritional value, e.g., fortifying “energy” bars made from processed flour with multiple vitamins and minerals. Fortification nutrients are added to products in varying amounts, from small percentages up to amounts greater than recommended intakes.

**fruits component:** The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that is comprised of fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) and pasteurized full-strength juice. Fruit juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. For more information, visit the [“Fruits Component for Grades K-12”](#) section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

**full component:** The daily quantity designated by the menu planner (no less than the established minimum) to meet the required weekly ranges.

**full serving:** Refer to “full component” in this section.

**full-strength fruit or vegetable juice:** An undiluted product obtained by extraction from sound fruit. Full-strength juice may be fresh, canned, frozen or reconstituted from concentrate and may be served in either liquid or frozen state or as an ingredient in a recipe. The name of the full-strength fruit juice on the label must include one of the following terms: “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “100 percent juice,” “reconstituted juice,” or “juice from concentrate.” For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).

**germ:** The vitamin-rich sprouting section of the whole-grain kernel. Germ is not a whole grain and does not credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. It must count toward the limit for noncreditable grains. For information on noncreditable grains, refer to the CSDE’s guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

**grade groups:** Refer to “age/grade groups” in this section.

## Glossary

**grains component:** The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that is comprised of cereal grains and products made from their flours. Grain products and recipes must be WGR to credit as the grains component in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. For more information, refer to “Grains Component” in section 3 and visit the [“Grains Component for Grades K-12”](#) section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

**grains:** Plants in the grass family, which produce a dry, edible fruit commonly called a kernel, grain, or berry.

**legumes:** Plants that grow in pods. Legumes include pulses, which are the edible dried seeds of plants in the legume family, such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, and split peas. Pulses include all beans, peas, and lentils cooked from dry, canned, or frozen, such as kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, pink beans, black-eyed peas, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), split peas, pigeon peas, mung beans, and lentils. The meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs allow legumes to credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetable component. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP](#).

**local educational agency (LEA):** A public board of education or other public or private nonprofit authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public or private nonprofit elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public or private nonprofit elementary schools or secondary schools. The term also includes any other public or private nonprofit institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public or private nonprofit elementary school or secondary school, including residential child care institutions, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies, as well as the state educational agency in a state or territory in which the state educational agency is the sole educational agency for all public or private nonprofit schools.

**main dish:** The main dish is generally considered the main food item in the menu, which is complemented by the other food items. Examples of main dish items include pizza, chicken stir-fry, and chef’s salad with ham, hard-boiled egg, and cheese.

**meal pattern:** The required food components and minimum serving sizes that schools and institutions participating in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs must provide to receive federal reimbursement for meals and snacks served to children. For more information, visit CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

**meals:** Refer to “reimbursable meals” in this section.

**meat alternates:** Foods that provide a similar protein content to meat. Meat alternates include alternate protein products, cheese, eggs, cooked dry beans or peas, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut, and coconut), yogurt, soy yogurt, commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein in a ¼-cup (2.2 ounces) serving, and tempeh. For more information, refer to “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” in section 3, and the CSDE’s resources, [Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the NSLP and SBP](#), [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP](#), and [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP](#).

**meat/meat alternates component:** The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that includes meats (e.g., beef, poultry, and fish) and meat alternates, such as eggs, cheese, yogurt, beans and peas (legumes) nuts, and seeds. For more information, refer to “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” in section 3 and visit the “[Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

**menu item:** Any planned main dish, vegetable, fruit, bread, grain, or milk that is part of the reimbursable meal. Menu items consist of food items. For more information, refer to “food item” in this section.

**milk component:** The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that includes pasteurized fluid milk that meets the fat content and flavor requirements of the USDA regulations. The milk component also includes fluid milk substitutes that meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, refer to “fluid milk substitutes” and “nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes” in this section, and visit the “[Milk Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

**National School Lunch Program (NSLP):** The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. It was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [National School Lunch Program](#) webpage.

**noncreditable foods:** Foods and beverages that do not contribute toward the meal patterns for the USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs. Noncreditable foods and beverages are either in amounts too small to credit (i.e., foods and beverage that do not provide the minimum creditable amount of a food component) or they do not fit into one of the meal pattern components. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).

**noncreditable grains:** Grain ingredients that do not contribute toward the grains component. Examples include fiber, bran, germ, and modified food starch (including potato, legume, and other vegetable flours). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

**nutrient-dense foods:** Foods that provide substantial amounts of naturally occurring vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients with relatively few calories. Nutrient-dense foods include lean sources of protein and/or complex carbohydrates that are low in total fat and saturated fats. Examples include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or nonfat dairy products, lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, eggs, and beans. Foods and beverages that are not nutrient dense supply calories (from fat, added sugars, and processed carbohydrates) but relatively small amounts of nutrients (and sometimes none at all), unless fortified.

**nutrient-rich foods:** Refer to “nutrient-dense foods” in this section.

**nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes:** The nutrition requirements for nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) used as fluid milk substitutes in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. The USDA requires that any fluid milk substitutes are nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk and meet the following nutrients based on a 1-cup serving (8 fluid ounces): 276 milligrams (mg) of calcium; 8 grams (g) of protein; 500 international units (IU) of vitamin A; 100 IU of vitamin D; 24 mg of magnesium; 222 mg of phosphorus; 349 mg of potassium; 0.44 mg of riboflavin; and 1.1 micrograms (mcg) of vitamin B-12. For more information, refer to “USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, *Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs*.

**offer versus serve (OVS):** A provision that applies to menu planning and the determination of reimbursable meals for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. OVS allows students to decline a certain number of food components or items in the meal. The SFA must offer the required meal components to each student. In the NSLP, students must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full portion (minimum serving size) of at least two other components. In the SBP, students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered). OVS must be implemented in senior high schools for lunch but is optional for breakfast. For junior high, middle schools and elementary schools, OVS is optional for both breakfast and lunch.

**ounce equivalent:** A weight-based unit of measure for the grains component and meat/meat alternate component of the NSLP and the SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Ounce equivalents account for dry versus cooked grains and variations in meats/meat alternates. An ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component is sometimes more than a measured ounce, depending on the food’s density and nutrition content. An ounce equivalent of the grains component is less than a measured ounce for some grain foods (such as pretzels, breadsticks, and crackers), equal to a measured ounce for some grain foods (such as bagels, biscuits, bread, rolls, cereal grains, and RTE breakfast cereals), and more than a measured ounce for some grain foods (such as muffins and pancakes). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s document, *Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP*.

**point-of-service (POS) meal count:** The point in the food service operation where a determination can accurately be made that a reimbursable free, reduced-price, or paid lunch has been served to an eligible child.

**product formulation statement (PFS):** An information statement obtained from the manufacturer that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA's meal pattern requirements, and documents how this information is obtained citing Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations. All creditable ingredients in this statement must match a description in the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. The PFS must be prepared on company letterhead with the signature of a company official and the date of issue. Unlike a CN label, a PFS does not provide any warranty against audit claims. SFAs must check the manufacturer's crediting information for accuracy prior to including the product in reimbursable meals. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, *Product Formulation Statements* and *Accepting Processed Product Documentation*.

**recognizable food item:** A food that is visible in the offered breakfast or lunch, and allows students to identify the food groups and amounts recommended for consumption at mealtime. Foods must be recognizable to credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. The USDA allows some exceptions, such as yogurt blended in fruit or vegetable smoothies, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and pasta made with 100 percent vegetable flours.

**reimbursable meals:** Meals and ASP snacks that meet the meal pattern requirements of the USDA's regulations for Child Nutrition Programs. Reimbursable meals contain the minimum serving of each required food component.

**residential child care institution (RCCI):** RCCIs include, but are not limited to homes for the mentally, emotionally or physically impaired, and unmarried mothers and their infants; group homes; halfway houses; orphanages; temporary shelters for abused children and for runaway children; long-term care facilities for chronically ill children; and juvenile detention centers. A long-term care facility is a hospital, skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, or distinct part thereof, which is intended for the care of children confined for 30 days or more.

**School Breakfast Program (SBP):** The USDA's federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The SBP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free breakfasts to children each school day. The program was established under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to ensure that all children have access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote learning readiness and healthy eating behaviors. For more information, visit the CSDE's [School Breakfast Program](#) webpage.

**school food authority (SFA):** The governing body that is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and has the legal authority to operate the USDA school nutrition programs.

**school nutrition programs:** The USDA’s school nutrition programs include the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP, Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Special Milk Program (SMP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-risk Summer Program implemented in schools. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

**Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP (SSO):** The USDA’s federally assisted summer feeding program that combines features of the NSLP, SBP, and SFSP, and serves meals free of charge to children ages 18 and younger from low-income areas. School districts participating in the NSLP or SBP are eligible to apply to the CSDE to participate in the SSO. SSO meals follow the meal patterns of the NSLP and SBP. For more information, visit the [Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP](#) webpage.

**serving size or portion:** The weight, measure, number of pieces, or slices of a food or beverage. SFAs must provide the minimum serving sizes specified in the USDA meal patterns for meals and snacks to be reimbursable.

**Special Milk Program (SMP):** The USDA’s federally assisted program that provides milk to children in schools and child care institutions that do not participate in other federal meal service programs. The SMP reimburses schools for the milk they serve. Schools in the NSLP or SBP may also participate in the SMP to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Special Milk Program](#) webpage.

**standardized recipe:** A recipe that a given food service operation has tested and adapted for use. This recipe produces the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same type of equipment, and the same quantity and quality of ingredients. Standardized recipes include specific information such as ingredients, weights and measures, preparation directions, serving directions, yield, and portion size. For more information, refer to the “[Standardized Recipes](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

**surimi:** Pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood usually made from pollock (fish). A 3-ounce serving of surimi credits as 1 oz eq of the meat/meat alternates component.

**tempeh:** A highly nutritious fermented soybean cake traditionally made from whole soybeans. A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 oz eq of the meat/meat alternates component.



**trans fats:** A type of unsaturated fat that is structurally different from the unsaturated fatty acids that occur naturally in plant foods, and therefore has different health effects. Trans fats increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Most trans fats are artificially made as the result of “hydrogenation.” This manufacturing process transforms liquid vegetable oils into a solid (saturated) fat to increase shelf life and enhance the flavor and texture of food products. Sources of trans fatty acids include partially hydrogenated vegetable oils used in processed foods such as desserts, microwave popcorn, frozen pizza, some margarines, and coffee creamer. Trans fats are also present naturally in foods that come from ruminant animals (e.g., cattle and sheep) such as dairy products, beef, and lamb.

**USDA Foods:** Foods available to the USDA Child Nutrition Programs through the CSDE’s Food Distribution Program. For more information, visit the USDA’s [Food Distribution Programs](#) webpage and the CSDE’s [Food Distribution Program](#) webpage.

**vegetable subgroups:** The five categories of vegetables within the vegetables component that are required over the week in the NSLP meal pattern. The subgroups include dark green, red/ orange, beans and peas (legumes), starchy, and other vegetables. For more information, refer to “Vegetable Subgroups at Lunch” in section 3 and visit the “[Vegetables Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

**whole fruits and vegetables:** Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables that are unprocessed or minimally processed, and do not contain added ingredients such as fat, sugars, or sodium.

**whole grain-rich:** For the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12, whole grain-rich foods must contain at least 50 percent whole grains, any other grain ingredients must be enriched, and any noncreditable grains must be less than two percent ( $\frac{1}{4}$  ounce equivalent) of the product formula. For more information, refer to “Part C: WGR Criteria” in section 3 and the CSDE’s guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

**whole grains:** Grains that consist of the entire kernel, including the starchy endosperm, the fiber-rich bran, and the nutrient-rich germ. All grains start out as whole grains but many are processed to remove the bran and germ, which also removes many of the nutrients. Whole grains are nutrient rich, containing vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and health-enhancing phytonutrients such as lignans and flavonoids. Examples of whole grains include whole wheat, whole oats, oatmeal, whole-grain cornmeal, brown rice, whole rye, whole barley, wild rice, buckwheat, and bulgur (cracked wheat). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP](#).





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